



The R^ev^d Father in God Will^{mo} Beveridge
D. D. late Lord Bishop of S^t. ASAPH.

No more of frail Mortalys complain,
Imperial Death or his Tyrannick Reign -
That others comes with common Death, and by
such like him to live, like him to die.
With such Detraction was his Spirit fraught,
And furnished with such ill-wishers taught.

Humble & Meek, Learned & Piene Preacher -
Of good Report & faithful to his Trust
Loyall, sober, modest, of his Charge,
Who fed his Sheep, & did them feed -
Told them their Brethren were their Countrymen
Read for his work & done it well.

PRIVATE THOUGHTS:
In Two PARTS Complete.

PART I.
UPON
RELIGION,
Digested into
TWELVE ARTICLES;
With Practical
RESOLUTIONS
Form'd thereupon.

PART II.
UPON A
CHRISTIAN LIFE;
OR,
Necessary Directions for its Beginning and Progress
upon EARTH, in Order to its Final Perfection in the
BEATIFICK VISION.

By the Right Reverend Father in GOD,
WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, D. D.
Late Lord Bishop of St. ASAPH.

The TWELFTH EDITION.

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208



THE PREFACE.



AFTER so great a Name as that of Bishop BEVERIDGE in the *Title*, it was as superfluous to attempt any farther Recommendation of these *Papers*, as it would be impossible to effect it. If any thing can add to the Esteem they must every where meet with, upon the Account of so great an Author, it must be a serious Perusal and Application of them.

THOSE that read them with the same Spirit of Candour, with which this Great Man always read the Works of others, and with the same Spirit of Piety, with which he wrote his Own; will undoubtedly discover in them such a lively Idea of the Great Genius of the Author, and so sensibly experience the good Influence of them upon their Minds, as will more effectually engage their Approbation, than the highest Encomiums from another Hand.

The PREFACE.

THE great Misfortune is, That those who have most need to be Instructed and Reform'd, have no true Taste or Relish for Books of this Nature: Their Eyes are dazzled with the glittering Appearances of the Objects of Sense, and their Hearts enslaved to the Works of Darkness; so that the Beams of Divine Light are but troublesome and offensive to them: Every Point of Faith is a Contradiction to their Principles, and every Precept enjoin'd, a Reproach to their Morals. And, therefore, in order to stave off those self-condemning Thoughts, that naturally arise from the serious Perusal of such sort of Treatises; they scoff at, and despise them, as Dull and Infipid; not worth the Consideration of Men of more refin'd Parts and deeper Penetration, who are too wise to be guided by the Rule of G O D's *Word*, and too obstinate to be persuaded to walk in any other Path, but that which the Devil has chalk'd out for them, *The Path which leads to Destruction.*

BUT these Men would do well to consider, before they are wholly under the Power of Delusion, that this is not really owing to any Flaws or Defects in such Performances, but to their own reprobate Minds and deprav'd Judgments, which tarnish the Beauty, cast a Mist before the Truth, frustrate the Influence, and pervert the Design of them; like a vitiated Palate, which nauseates the most delicious Tastes; or a foul and disorder'd Stomach, that turns the most wholesome Food into Poison and Corruption. So that they must first divest themselves of their Lust and Pride, their Prejudice and Partiality, before they can ever expect to reap any Benefit or Advantage by this, or any other Discourses, that tend to the promoting of Piety, and Religion.

HAVING thus open'd the Way to the Reading of this Book, it may not be improper in order to set it in its true Light, and do Justice to the Author of it, to say something more particularly concerning Both; and to advertise the Reader, that the following Sheets were writ by the Bishop in his Younger Years, upon his first Entrance into Holy Orders. And tho' they may not, perhaps, be

so

The PREFACE.

so perfect and correct, as if He Himself had liv'd to give the finishing Stroke to them, and fit them for the Press with his own Hand; yet as the Roughness of a Jewel doth not lessen the Worth and Value of it, when the Brightness of its Natural Lustre, even under that Disadvantage, outshines that of others, which are polish'd and refin'd by Art; so, 'tis to be hop'd, the Candid and Judicious Reader will, in this well design'd Piece, however unfinish'd, discover such singular Beauties and Graces, as few others, even at the highest Pitch of their Attainments, and with the utmost Care and Diligence, are able to come up to.

As to the Author's Design in writing these Papers, it is sufficiently set forth in the Title of them. He consider'd, That Truth of Doctrine, and Innocency of Life, were both absolutely necessary to the due Exercise of the Sacred Function, which he had the Honour and Happiness to be admitted into. He knew the Power of Example to prevail even beyond that of Precept, and was very solicitous, with the Blessed Apostle, to *make his own Calling and Election sure, lest that by any means, when he had preach'd to others, he himself should be a Cast-away.* To the End, therefore, that he might both *save Himself, and them that heard him, that both by his Life and Doctrine, he might set forth the Glory of G O D, and set forward the Salvation of Men,* He drew up these Articles, to settle his Principles in Point of Faith, and form'd these Resolutions upon them, to regulate His Actions with regard to Practice.

WHAT great Things might not the Church promise herself from a Foundation so well laid? from Principles settled with so much Learnaing and Judgment, and Resolutions form'd upon such strict Rules of Piety and Religion? What glorious Expectations in an Age of that Degeneracy of Faith and Manners, wherein he then liv'd, might not be justly rais'd from hence, for the future Reformation of both?

AND, indeed, this Excellent Person did even more than satisfy all these Extraordinary Hopes which the early and

The PREFACE.

ample Specimens he gave of his Virtue and Knowledge had made the World conceive of Him. For having taken this prudent and effectual Care to ground and determine his own Faith and Practice ; and being ever mindful of that Injunction laid upon him, when he was ordain'd Priest, " *To consider the End of his Ministry towards the Children of GOD, towards the Spouse and Body of CHRIST; he never ceas'd his Labour, Care and Diligence, until He had done all that in him lay (as our Holy Church does most admirably express the Duty of that Order) to bring all such as were committed to his Charge, unto that Agreement in the Faith and Knowledge of GOD, and to that Ripeness and Perfectness of Age in CHRIST, that there shoudl be no Place left among them for Error in Religion, or for Viciousness in Life.* "

WHILE his Care of Souls was chiefly confin'd to the Bounds of a single Parish, with what Labour and Zeal did he apply himself to the Discharge of his Ministry, in the several Parts and Offices of it ! How Powerful and Instructive was he in his Discourses from the Pulpit ! How Warm and Affectionate in his Private Exhortations ! How Orthodox in his Doctrine ! How Regular and Uniform in the Publick Worship of the Church ! In a Word, so zealous was he, and Heavenly-minded, in all the Spiritual Exercises of his Parochial Function, and his Labours were so remarkably crown'd with Blessing and Success, that as He himself was justly styl'd, the Great Reviver and Restorer of Primitive Piety ; so his Parish was deservedly propos'd, as the best Model and Pattern, for the rest of its Neighbours to copy after.

NOR was the Archdeacon, or the Bishop, less Vigilant than the Parish-Priest : His Care and Diligence increas'd as his Power in the Church was enlarg'd ; and as He had before discharg'd the Duty of a Faithful Pastor over his single Fold, so when his Authority was extended to larger Districts, he still pursu'd the same Pious and Laborious Methods of advancing the Honour and Interest of Religion, by watching over both Clergy and Laity, and giving

The PREFACE.

giving them all necessary Direction and Assistance for the effectual Performance of their respective Duties.

ACCORDINGLY, He was no sooner advanc'd to the Episcopal Chair, but in a most Pathetick and obliging Letter to the Clergy of his Diocese, he recommended to them, “ the Duty of Catechising and Instructing the People committed to their Charge, in the Principles of the Christian Religion; to the End they might know what they were to believe, and do, in order to Salvation: And told them, “ He thought it necessary to begin with that, without which, whatever else He, or They, should do, would turn to little or no Account, as to the main End of the Ministry. And to enable them to do this the more effectually, He sent them a plain and easy *Exposition upon the Church-Catechism*; of which I need say nothing more, and can say nothing greater, than that it was drawn up by Himself, in a Method, which, in the Opinion of so great a Judge, seem'd, of all others, the most proper to instruct the People.

T H U S endeavouring to make Himself and others every Day wiser and better, labouring to establish Sound Principles, and settle Good Manners wherever he came, as it was the Foundation which this Holy Man laid in these *Articles* and *Resolutions*; so we see it was the great Work of his Life, to build upon it; as might easily be made appear, from a faithful and particular Relation of the several Stages and Passages of it, during the Course of his Ministry; the bare Enumeration of which would swell this Preface into a Book. That fair Portrait will, I hope, be drawn by some Abler Pen.

I N the mean time, there is yet another Instance of his great Concern and unwearied Endeavours for the establishing of sound Doctrine, which I must not omit the Mention of, because 'tis a Work of so much Affinity, with these *Articles*, and what the Reader may, with great Advantage have recourse to, for farther Satisfaction upon these General Heads of Divinity, which he has here given us only in Abridgment; 'Tis his Learned *Exposition upon*

The PREFACE.

the Thirty Nine Articles, which is promis'd, in a short time, to be committed to the Pres; and which is the more earnestly desir'd and expected, as being a Performance, which the Church, at this time, so much wants, and which He, beyond others, was, in such an extraordinary manner, qualify'd for.

SUCH Discourses as these, the One giving a true Exposition of the Doctrine of our Church, the Other endeavouring to establish it by an Orthodox Faith, and an unspotted Life, were never more seasonable than in this Age; when the very *Being* of the Church is call'd in Question, under a Pretence of maintaining her *Rights*; and the Principles of *Christianity* are no longer secretly undermin'd, but openly attack'd: when Books are publish'd against all Reveal'd Religion, and Deism insults and triumphs bare-fac'd, without Restraint, without Reproach. In a word, When we are arriv'd to that Dif-soluteness of Manners, as well as Principles, that Persons of the highest Quality, and Station, are address'd to in Print, as Patrons of Libertinism; and that which has, in all Ages, been call'd, and esteem'd, the greatest Wisdom, is scoffed at by false Wit; and *Christianity*, under the Notion of Enthusiasm, expos'd to the Contempt of the meanest Capacities, and hooted out of the World by the very Dregs of the People.

IN so general an Inundation of Prophaneness, and Licentiousness, Providence seem'd indeed to have rais'd up this Great and Good Man to stand in the Gap, and stem the Tide against it: But where the Torrent is so impetuous, and the Forces, that should unite in striving to divert it, so weak and pusillanimous, there is more Danger the very Opposers should be born down the Stream, than there are Hopes of making good the Opposition. But, however the Doctrine and Discipline of our Church may be misrepresented, exploded and despis'd, and our Holy Religion become only a *Name*, which is almost every where spoken against: This Good Bishop will nevertheless have the Honour, as he already enjoys the Reward, not only of bearing Testimony against the growing Ill, but

of

The PREFACE.

of having done all that he could (and who could do more than He?) to restrain and subdue it.

It may, perhaps, be thought a bad Omen to our Church, to have lost so able a Champion, when she seems to stand so much in need of Him. But, blessed be GOD, we have not altogether lost Him: He has left us behind him, in these excellent Papers, (to say nothing of His Sermons, and other incomparable Writings) such clear Reasoning, and convincing Arguments for the grounding of our Principles; and such useful Rules and Directions for the Government of our Conversation, that we may yet hope for a happy Reformation in Both, if we are not wanting to ourselves in the Use and Application of them.

WOULD the Clergy, the younger sort especially, take this Method, upon their first Admission into Holy Orders, (and it ought to be no hard Matter to persuade them to it, since 'tis the very End and Design of their Ministry) it could not fail, by the Blessing of GOD, of producing very admirable Effects. Their *Principles*, thus prudently settled, would stand the Shock, even of a fiery Trial; and their *Resolutions*, thus maturely form'd, would undauntedly bear up against the most powerful Temptation.

THIS, if any thing, would raise the Dignity of the *Priesthood* to its first Institution, silence all the loud Clamours, as well as malicious Whispers, that, like Echo's, are redoubled and reverberated upon them; and gain them such an Interest and Reputation among the People, and such an Honour and Authority in the Discharge of their Function, that from reverencing the Person, and commanding the Pattern, they would insensibly proceed to the Imitation of it; 'till, by degrees, the Flock too, as well as the Shepherd, would become wise to Salvation, would devoutly sanctify the Lord GOD in their Hearts, and not only so, but be ready always to give an Answer to every one that should ask them a Reason of the Hope that is in them.

AND

The PREFACE.

AND were both Clergy and Laity thus rightly principled, and firmly resolv'd, the Enemies of our Zion would have both less Encouragement to attack, and less Power to hurt us; Our National Church might then despise all the wicked Attempts and Designs that are daily made and form'd against her, and assure to Herself that comfortable Promise and Assurance, that our Saviour Himself has given, that even *the Gates of Hell shall never be able to prevail against Her.*

ALL that I have farther to say, is only to apologize for having said so much, upon a Subject that so little needs it; and to close the whole with my hearty Prayers to the Throne of Grace, that this Pious and Excellent Book may meet with that desir'd Effect and Success, which the Author aimed at in the Composing of it, and may be as useful to Others, as it was to Himself.



C O N-



CONTENTS.

T Houghts on Religion.

Page 1.

- ARTICLE I. *I believe there is one GOD, the Being of all Beings.* p. 5.
- ART. II. *I believe, that whatsoever the Most High GOD would have me to believe or do, in order to His Glory, and my Happiness, He bath revealed to me, in His Holy Scriptures.* p. 8.
- ART. III. *I believe, that as there is one GOD, so this one GOD is three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* p. 29.
- ART. IV. *I believe, that I was conceiv'd in Sin, and brought forth in Iniquity; and that, ever since, I have been continually conceiving Mischief, and bringing forth Vanity.* p. 31.
- ART. V. *I believe the Son of GOD became the Son of Man, that I, the Son of Man, might become the Son of GOD.* p. 32.
- ART. VI. *I believe, that CHRIST liv'd to GOD, and died for Sin, that I might die to Sin, and live with GOD.* p. 38.
- ART. VII. *I believe, that CHRIST rose from the Grave, that I might rise from Sin, and that He is ascended into Heaven, that I may come unto Him.* p. 40.
- ART. VIII. *I believe, that my Person is only justified by the Merit of CHRIST imputed to me; and that my Nature is only sanctified by the Spirit of CHRIST implanted in me.* p. 42.
- ART. IX. *I believe, GOD enter'd into a double Covenant with Man, the Covenant of Works made with the first, and the Covenant of Grace made in the second Adam.* p. 54.

ART.

CONTENTS.

- ARTICLE X. *I believe, that as GOD enter'd into a Covenant of Grace with us, so hath He sign'd this Covenant to us by a double Seal, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.* p. 61.
- ARTICLE XI. *I believe, that after a short Separation, my Soul and my Body shall be united together again, in order to appear before the Judgment Seat of CHRIST, and be finally sentenc'd according to my Deserts.* p. 69.
- ARTICLE XII. *I believe, there are two other Worlds besides this I live in; a World of Misery for unrepenting Sinners, and a World of Glory for believing Saints.* p. 77.



RESOLUTIONS form'd from the foregoing ARTICLES.

RESOLUTION I.

I Am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to walk by Rule, and therefore, think it necessary, to resolve upon Rules to walk by. p. 83.

RESOLUTION II. I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to make the Divine Word the Rule of all the Rules I propose to myself. p. 84.

RESOLUTION III. I am resolv'd, That as I am not able to think or do any thing that is Good, without the Influence of the Divine Grace, so I will not pretend to merit any Favour from GOD upon Account of any thing I do for His Glory and Service. p. 85.

Concerning my Conversation in general.

RESOL. I. I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to make CHRIST the Pattern of my Life here, that so CHRIST may be the Portion of my Soul hereafter. p. 88.

RESO-

CONTENTS.

- RESOLUTION II. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to walk by Faith, and not by Sight, on Earth, that so I may live by Sight, and not by Faith, in Heaven.* p. 89.
RESOLUTION III. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to be looking upon GOD, as always looking upon me.* p. 91.

Concerning my Thoughts.

- RESOL. I. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to watch as much over the inward Motions of my Heart, as the outward Actions of my Life.* p. 93.
RESOL. II. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to stop every Thought at its first Entering into my Heart, and to examine it whence it comes, and whether it tends.* p. 94.
RESOL. III. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to be as fearful to let in vain, as careful to keep out sinful Thoughts.* p. 95.
RESOL. IV. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to be always exercising my Thoughts upon good Objects, that the Devil may not exercise them upon bad.* p. 97.
RESOL. V. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, so to marshal my Thoughts, that they may not one jostle out another, nor any of them prejudice the Business I am about.* p. 99.

Concerning my Affections.

- RESOL. I. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to make my Affections subservient to the Dictates of my Understanding, that my Reason may not follow, but guide my Affections.* p. 101.
RESOL. II. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to love GOD, as the best of Goods, and to hate Sin, as the worst of Evils.* p. 103.
RESOL. III. *I am resolv'd, by the Assistance of Divine Grace, to make GOD the principal Object of my Joy,*

C O N T E N T S.

- Joy, and Sin the principal Object of my Grief and Sorrow; so as to grieve for Sin more than Suffering, and for Suffering only for Sin's Sake.* p. 106.
- RESOL. IV.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to desire spiritual Mercies more than temporal; and temporal Mercies only in reference to spiritual.* p. 108.
- RESOL. V.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to hope for nothing so much as the Promises, and to fear nothing so much as the Threatnings of GOD.* p. 109.
- RESOL. VI.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to arm myself with that spiritual Courage and Magnanimity, as to press through all Duties and Difficulties whatsoever, for the Advancement of GOD's Glory, and my own Happiness.* p. 112.
- RESOL. VII.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, so to be angry, as not to sin, and therefore to be angry at nothing but Sin.* p. 113.

Concerning my Words.

- RESOL. I.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, never to speak much, lest I often speak too much, and not to speak at all, rather than to no purpose.* p. 116.
- RESOL. II.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, not only to avoid the Wickedness of Swearing falsely, but likewise the very Appearance of Swearing at all.* p. 118.
- RESOL. III.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to make my Tongue and Heart go together, so as never to speak with the one, what I do not think in the other.* p. 120.
- RESOL. IV.** *I am resolv'd, by the Divine Grace, to speak of other Mens Sins only before their Faces, and of their Virtues only behind their Backs.* p. 122.
- RESOL. V.** *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to speak reverently to my Superiors, humbly to my Inferiors, and civilly to all.* p. 123.

Concern-

CONTENTS.

Concerning my Actions.

- RESOL. I. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do every thing in Obedience to the Will of GOD.* p. 126.
- RESOL. II. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do every Thing with Prudence and Discretion, as well as with Zeal and Affection.* p. 128.
- RESOL. III. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, never to set my Hand, my Head, or my Heart, about any thing, but what I verily believe is good in itself, and will be esteemed so by GOD.* p. 129.
- RESOL. IV. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do all things for the Glory of GOD.* p. 131.
- RESOL. V. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to mingle such Recreations with my Business, as to farther my Business by my Recreations.* p. 132.

Concerning my Relations.

- RESOL. I. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to honour and obey the King, or Prince, whom GOD is pleas'd to set over me, as well as to expect He should safeguard and protect me, whom GOD is pleas'd to set under him.* p. 135.
- RESOL. II. *I am resolv'd, by the same Divine Grace, to be as constant in loving of my Wife, as cautious in chusing her.* p. 138.
- RESOL. III. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do my Endeavour to give to GOD whatsoever Children He shall be pleas'd to give to me, that as they are mine by Nature, they may be His by Grace.* p. 141.
- RESOL. IV. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do my Duty to my Servants, as well as expect they do theirs to me.* p. 143.
- RESOL. V. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to feed the Flock that GOD shall set me over, with wholsome Food, neither starving them by Idleness, poisoning them with Error, nor puffing them up with Impertinencies.* p. 145.

RESOL.

CONTENTS.

RESOL. VI. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to be as faithful and constant to my Friend, as I would have my Friend to be faithful and constant to me.* p. 148.

Concerning my Talents.

RESOL. I. *I am resolv'd, if possible, to redeem my Time past, by using a double Diligence for the future, to employ and improve all the Gifts, and Endowments, both of Body and Mind, to the Glory and Service of my great Creator.* p. 151.

RESOL. II. *I am resolv'd, by the Divine Grace, to employ my Riches, the outward Blessings of Providence, to the same End; and to observe a due Medium in the dispensing of them, as to avoid Prodigality on the one hand, and Covetousness on the other.* p. 153.

RESOL. III. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to improve the Authority GOD gives me over others, to the Suppression of Vice, and the Encouragement of Virtue; and so for the Exaltation of GOD's Name on Earth, and their Souls in Heaven.* p. 155.

RESOL. IV. *I am resolv'd, by the Divine Grace, to improve the Affections GOD stirs up in others towards me, to the stirring up of their Affections towards GOD.* p. 157.

RESOL. V. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to improve every good Thought to the producing of good Affections in myself, and as good Actions with respect to GOD.* p. 159.

RESOL. VI. *I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to improve every Affliction GOD lays upon me, as an Earnest or Token of His Affection towards me.* p. 160.

THOUGHTS



Time
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151.
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153.
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155.
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157.
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159.
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. 160.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION.



HEN, in my serious Thoughts, and more retir'd Meditations, I am got into the Closet of my Heart, and there begin to look *within* myself, and consider what I am, I presently find myself to be a *reasonable* Creature: For, was I not so, it would be impossible for me thus to *reason* and *reflect*. But, am I a *reasonable* Creature? Why then, I am sure, within this Veil of *Flesh* there dwells a *Soul*, and that of a *higher* Nature, than either *Plants* or *Brutes* are endu'd with; for they have *Souls* indeed, but yet they *know* it not, and that, because their *Souls*, or *material Forms*, (as the Philosophers term them) are not any thing *really* and *essentially distinct* from the very *Matter* of their *Bodies*; which being not capable of a *reflexive Act*, though they are, they *know* it not, and though they *act*, they *know* it not; it being not possible for them to look *within themselves*, or to *reflect* upon their own *existencies* and *Actions*. But 'tis not so with me; I not only *know* I have a *Soul*, but that I have *such* a *Soul*, which can *consider* of *itself*, and *deliberate* of every particular *Action* that issues from it. Nay, I can *consider*, that I am now considering of my own *Actions*, and can *reflect* upon myself reflecting; insomuch, that had I nothing else to do, I could spin out one *Reflection* upon another, to *Infinity*.

AND,

2 Thoughts on Religion.

AND, indeed, was there never another Argument in the World, to convince me of the *Spiritual Nature* of my *Soul*, this alone would be sufficient to *wrest* the *Belief* and *Confession* of it from me: For, what below a *Spirit*, can thus *reflect upon itself*? or, what below a *Spirit*, can put forth *itself* into such *Actions*, as I find I can exercise myself in? My *Soul* can, in a Moment, mount from Earth to Heaven, fly from Pole to Pole, and view all the Courses and Motions of the Celestial Bodies, the Sun, Moon, and Stars; and then the next Moment returning to myself again, I can *consider*, where I have been, what glorious Objects have been presented to my View; and wonder at the Nimbleness and Activity of my *Soul*, that can run over so many Millions of Miles, and finish so great a Work, in so small a Space of Time. And are such like *Acts* as these, the Effects of drossy *Earth*, or impenetrable *Matter*? Can any thing below a *Spirit* raise *itself* so much beyond the Reach of *material Actions*?

BUT stay a little; What is this *Soul* of mine, that I am now speaking of, that it is so *nimble* in its *Actions*, and so *spiritual* in its *Nature*? Why, 'tis that, which *actuates* and *informs* the several *Organs* and *Members* of my *Body*, and *enables* me not only to perform the *Natural Actions* of *Life* and *Sense*, but likewise to *understand*, *consult*, *argue*, and *conclude*; to *will* and *nill*, *hope* and *despair*, *desire* and *abhor*, *joy* and *grieve*, *love* and *bate*; to be *angry* now, and again *appeased*. 'Tis that, by which at this very time, my *Head* is *inditing*, my *Hand* is *writing*, and my *Heart* *resolving*, what to *believe*, and how to *practise*. In a word; my *Soul* is *Myself*, and, therefore when I speak of my *Soul*, I speak of no other Person but *myself*.

NOT as if I totally *excluded* this earthly Substance of my *Body* from being a Part of *myself*: I know it is. But I think it most proper and reasonable to denominate *myself* from my better part: For, alas! take away my *Soul*, and my *Body* falls, on course, into its primitive Corruption, and moulders into the Dust, from whence it was first taken. *All Flesh is Grass*, says the Prophet, and all the Goodliness thereof is as the Flower of the Field. And this is no metaphorical Expression, but a real Truth; for what is that which I feed upon, but merely *Grass*, digested into

Thoughts on Religion.

3

into Corn, Flesh, and the like ; which, by a second Digestion, is trans fus'd and converted into the Substance of my *Body*? And hence it is, that my *Body* is but like the *Grass*, or *Flower* of the Field, fading, transient, and momentary, to Day flourishing in all its Glory, to Morrow cut down, dried up, and withered. But now, how far is this beneath the spiritual and incorruptible Nature of my Immortal *Soul*? which subsists of *itself*, and can never be dissolved; being not compounded of any Earthly or Elementary *Matter*, (as the *Body* is) but is a pure Spiritual Substance, infus'd into me by GOD, to whom, after a short Abode in the *Body*, it is to return, and to live and continue for ever, either in a State of Happiness, or Misery, in another Life.

BUT must it so indeed? How much, then, does it concern me, seriously to bethink *myself*, where I had best to lead this everlasting life, in the Heavenly Mansions of Eternal Glory, or else in the dreadful Dungeon of Infernal Misery? But betwixt these, (as there is no Medium, so) there is no Comparison; and, therefore, I shall not put it to the Question, which Place to chuse to live in? But without giving the other that Honour to stand in Competition with it; I, this Morning, with the Leave of the most High GOD, do chuse the Land of Canaan, the Kingdom of Heaven, to be the Lot of mine Inheritance, the only Seat of Bliss and Glory for my *Soul* to rest and dwell in, to all Eternity.

BUT Heaven, they say, is a Place hard to come at, yea, the King of that glorious Place hath told me, that *Strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, that leads to eternal Life, and that there be but few that find it*, Matt. vii. 14. Yea, and that *many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able*, Luke iii. 24. What, therefore, must I do? Why, I must either resolve to make it my whole Business to get to Heaven, or else I must never hope or expect to come thither. Without any farther Dispute, therefore, about it; I resolve, at this time, in the Presence of Almighty GOD, that from this Day forward, I will make it my *whole Business* here upon *Earth*, to look after my Happiness in *Heaven*, and to walk circumspectly in those blessed

Thoughts on Religion.

blessed Paths, that G O D hath appointed all to walk in, that ever expect to come to Him.

N o w, though there be but *one Way*, and that a *narrow one* too, that leads to *Heaven*; yet there are *two things* requisite to all *those* that walk in it; and they are *Faith* and *Obedience*, to believe and to live aright. So that it as much behoves me, to have my *Faith* rightly *confirm'd* in the Fundamentals of *Religion*, as to have my *Obedience* exactly *conform'd* to the *Laws* of *GOD*. And these *two Duties* are so inseparably *united*, that the *former* cannot well be suppos'd without the *latter*; for I cannot *obey* what *GOD* hath *commanded* me, unless I first *believe* what he hath *taught* me. And they are *both* equally *difficult*; as they are *necessary*: Indeed, of the *two*, I think it is *barder*, to lay the *sure Foundation* of *Faith*, than to build the *Superstructure* of *Obedience* upon it; for it seems next to *impossible*, for one that *believes* every *Truth*, not to *obey* every *Command*, that is written in the *Word* of *GOD*. But 'tis not so easy a thing, as 'tis commonly thought, to *believe* the *Word* of *GOD*, and to be firmly *establis'h'd* in the *necessary Points* of *Religion*; especially in these *wicked Times* wherein we live; in which there are so many *pernicious Errors* and *damnable Heresies* crept into the *Articles* of *some Mens Faith*, as do not only shock the *Foundation* of the *Church of CHRIST*, but *strike* at the *Root* of *all Religion*. The *first* thing, therefore, that, by the *Grace* of *GOD*, I am *resolv'd* to do, in reference to my *everlasting Estate*, is to see my *Faith*, that it be both *rightly plac'd* and *firmly fix'd*; that I may not be as a *Wave tossed to and fro with every Wind of Doctrine*, by the *cunning Craftiness* of *those*, that lie in wait to *deceive*; but that I may be thoroughly settled in my *Faith* and *Judgment* concerning *those* things, the *Knowlege* of, and *Affsent* unto which, is absolutely *necessary* to my future *Happiness*. Let, therefore, what *Times* soever come upon me; let what *Temptations* soever be thrown before me; I am *resolv'd*, by the *Grace* of *GOD*, stedfastly to *believe* as followeth.

ARTICLE I.

I believe there is one GOD, the Being of all Beings.

THE other Articles of my Faith I think to be true, because they are so; This is true, because I think it so: For if there was no GOD, and so this Article not true, I could not be, and so not think it true. But in that I think, I am sure I am; and in that I am, I am sure there is a GOD; for if there was no GOD, how came I to be? How came I hither? Who gave me my *Being*? *Myself*? that could not be; for before I had a *Being*, I was nothing; and, therefore, could do nothing, much less make *myself* a *Being*. Did my *Parents* give me my *Being*? Alas! they knew not that I should be, before I was; and, therefore, certainly, could not give me my *Being*, when I was not.

As to my *Soul*, (which I call *Myself*) it is plain, they could not give me *that*, because 'tis a *Being* of a *Spiritual Nature*, quite *distinct* from *Matter*, (as my own *Experience* tells me) and, therefore, could not be the *Product* of any *Natural* or *Material Agent*: For, that a *Bodily Substance* should give *Being* to a *Spiritual one*, implies a *Contradiction*. And if it could neither make *itself*, nor take its *Rise* from any *Earthly* or *Secondary Cause*, I may certainly conclude, from my own *Reason*, as well as from *Divine Revelation*, that it must be infus'd by *GOD*, tho' I am not able to determine, either *when*, or *how*, it was done.

As to my *Body*; indeed, I must own it was deriv'd from my *Parents*, who were immediately concern'd in bringing the *Materials* of it together: But, then, who made up these coarse *Materials* into the *Form* or *Figure* of a *Body*? Was this the *Effect* of *Natural Generation*? But how came my *Parents* by this *Generative Power*? Did they derive it, by *Succession*, from our *first Parents* in *Paradise*? Be it so. But whence came They? Did they spring out of the *Earth*? No, What then? Were they made by *Chance*? This could not be; for as *Chance* seldom or never produces any *one Effect*, that is *regular* and *uniform*,

Thoughts on Religion.

uniform, so it cannot be suppos'd, that a Being of such admirable Beauty, Symmetry, and Proportion, and such a nice Contexture of Parts, as the Body of Man is, should ever be jumbled together by a fortuitous Concource of Atoms, which nothing but the Chimæras of Epicurus could ever reduce into a regular Form and Composition.

AND the like may be said of all other created Beings in the World. For there is no Natural Cause can give Being to any thing, unless it has that Being it gives, in itself; for it is a received Maxim in Philosophy, that Nothing can give what it has not. And so, however the Bodies of Men, or Brutes, or Plants, may now, in the ordinary Course of Nature, be produc'd by Generation, yet there must needs be some one Supreme Almighty Being in the World, that has the Being of all other Beings in itself; who first created these several Species; and endu'd them with this Generative Power to propagate their Kind. And this Supreme Being is that which we call GOD.

HENCE it is, that there is not a Leaf, no not a Line, in this great Book of the Creation, wherein we may not clearly read the Existence and Perfections of the Great and Glorious Creator, and that even by the glimmering Light of Nature. For, Who is it, that bedeck'd yonder stately Canopy of Heaven, with those glistering Spangles the Stars? Who is it, that commands the Sun to run his Course, and the Moon to ride her Circuit so constantly about the World? Who is it, that formed me so curiously in my Mother's Womb? Who is it, that gives my Stomach Power to digest such Variety of Meats into Chyle, and my Heart or Liver to turn them all to Blood; and thence to send each Particle to its proper Place, and all to keep up this crazy Carcass? Doubtless, these, and such like things, however ordinary or natural, they may appear to us at present, are in themselves very great and wonderful Effects, that must, at first, be produced by some infinitely powerful and supernatural Agent, the High and Mighty GOD, who is not only the Chiefest of Beings, but the Being of all Beings whatsoever.

I say, the Being of all Beings, because whatsoever Excellency or Perfection is in any Other thing, is eminently, yea, infinitely comprehended in Him; so that he is not,

Thoughts on Religion.

7

not only the Creatures Perfection in the Concrete, but in the Abstract too : He is not only All-wise, All-good, All-mighty, &c. but he is All-wisdom, All-goodness, All-might, All-mercy, All-justice, All-glory, &c. And as he is the Ocean and Abyss of all these Perfections in *Himself*; so is He the Fountain of them all to us. Insomuch that We have nothing, not so much as the least Moment of Life, but what is communicated to us from This Everliving GOD. And not only what *We*, poor sinful Worms, are, or have, but even whatsoever those Nobler Creatures the *Angels* have, 'tis but a *Beam* darted from This *Sun*, 'tis but a *Stream* flowing from this Overflowing Fountain.

LIFT up thine Eyes therefore, O my Soul, and fix them, a little, upon this glorious Object! How glorious, how transcendently glorious, must He needs be, who is the *Being* of all Beings, the *Perfection* of all Perfections, the very *Glory* of all Glories, the Eternal GOD? He is the *Glory* of *Love* and *Goodness*, who is *Good*, and doth *Good* continually unto Me, tho' I be *Evil*, and do *Evil* continually against Him. He is the *Glory* of *Wisdom* and *Knowledge*, unto whom all the *secret* Thoughts, the *inward* Motions and Retirements of my *Soul*, are exactly known and manifest. Never did a Thought lurk so secretly in my *Heart*, but that his All-seeing *Eye* could espy it out: Even at this time, He knows what I am now thinking of, and what I am doing, as well as Myself. And indeed, well may He know what I think, and speak, and do, when I can neither think, nor speak, nor do any thing, unless Himself be pleas'd to give me *Strength* to do it. He is the *Glory* of *Might* and *Power*, who did but speak the *Word*, and there presently went out that commanding *Power* from Him, by which this stately Fabrick of the *World* was form'd and fashion'd. And as He created all things by the *Word* of his *Power*, so I believe, He preserves and governs all things by the *Power* of the same *Word*: Yea, so great is his *Power* and *Sovereignty*, that he can as easily frown my *Soul* from my *Body* into *Hell*, or *Nothing*, as I can throw this *Book* out of my *Hand* to the *Ground*: Nay, He need not throw me into *Nothing*; but, as, if I should let go my *Hold*, the *Book* would presently fall; so should

should GOD but take away His supporting Hand from under me, I should, of Myself, immediately fall down to Nothing. This, therefore, is that GOD, whom I believe to be the Being of all Beings ; and so the Creator, Preserver, Governor, and Disposer of all things in the World.

ARTICLE II.

I believe, that whatsoever the most High GOD would have me to believe or do, in order to His Glory and my Happiness, He hath reveal'd to me, in His Holy Scriptures.

UPON the same Account that I believe there is a GOD, I believe, likewise, that this GOD is to be worshipped ; the same Light that discovers the one, discovering the other too. And therefore it is, that as there is no Nation or People in the World, but acknowledge some Deity ; so there is none, but worship that Deity which they acknowledge ; yea, tho' it be but a Stick or a Stone, yet if they fancy any thing of Divinity in it, they presently perform *Worship* and *Homage* to it. Nay, that GOD is to be worshipp'd, is a Truth more generally acknowledg'd, than that there is a GOD. No Nation, I confess, ever denied the latter, but no particular Person ever denied the former : So that the very Persons, who through Diabolical Delusions, and their Own prevalent Corruptions, have suspected the Existence of a Deity, could not but acknowledge that he was to be worshipp'd, if he did exist ; *Worship* being that which is contain'd in the very *Notion* of a Deity ; which is, that He is the Being of all Beings, upon whom all other Things or Beings do depend, and unto whom they are beholden both for their *Essence* and *Subsistence*. And if there be such a Being, that is the Spring and Fountain of all Other Beings, it is necessary that all other should reverence and worship Him, without whom they could not subsist. And therefore it is that Men are generally more superstitious in their worshipping than they ought to be, rather than deny that Worship to Him, which they ought to give.

THAT,

Thoughts on Religion. 9

THAT, therefore there is a GOD, and that this GOD is to be worshipp'd, I do not doubt; but the great Question is, *Who* is this GOD, whom I ought to worship? and, *What* is that Worship, which I ought to perform unto Him? The former I have resolv'd upon in the foregoing Article, as the *Light of Reason* and my *Natural Conscience* suggested to me; the latter I am resolv'd to search out in This, viz. *Which* of all the *several* kinds of *Worship*, that Men *perform* to the *Deity*, and the *several Religions* that Men *profess* in the World, I had best make Choice of to *profess* and *adhere to*. The *general Inclinations* which are *naturally implanted* in my *Soul* to *some Religion*, it is *impossible* for me to *shift off*; but there being such a *Multiplicity* of Religions in the World, I desire now seriously to consider with myself, *which* of them *all* to *restrain* these my *general Inclinations* to.

AND the Reason of this my Enquiry is not that I am, in the least, dissatisfy'd with that Religion I have already embrac'd; but because 'tis natural for all Men to have an *overbearing Opinion* and *Esteem* for that particular Religion they are *born and bred up in*. That, therefore, I may not seem *bias'd* by the *Prejudice of Education*, I am resolved to *prove and examine them all*, that I may see and hold fast to *that which is best*. For tho' I do not, in the least, question, but that I shall, upon Enquiry, find the *Christian Religion* to be the only *true Religion* in the *World*, yet I cannot say, it is, unless I find it, upon *good Grounds*, to be *so indeed*: For, to *profess* myself a *Christian*, and *believe* that *Christians* are only in the *right*, because my *Forefathers* were so, is *no more* than the *Heathens* and *Mahometans* have to say for themselves.

INDEED, there was never *any Religion* so *barbarous* and *diabolical*, but it was preferr'd before all *other Religions* whatsoever, by them that did *profess* it; otherwise they would *not* have *profess'd* it. The *Indians*, that worship the *Devil*, would think it as *strange Doctrine* to say, *That CHRIST is to be fear'd more than the Devil*; as such as *believe in CHRIST*, think it is, to say, the *Devil* is to be preferr'd before *CHRIST*. So do the *Mahometans* call all that *believe not in Mahomet*, as well as *Christians* call those that *believe not in CHRIST*, *Infidels*. And why, say they,

they, may not you be mistaken, as well as we? especially, when there is at the least, *Six to One* against your *Christian Religion*; all of which think they serve *GOD aright*, and expect *Happiness* thereby, as well as you. So that to be a *Christian*, only upon the Grounds of *Birth or Education*, is all one, as if I was a *Turk* or a *Heathen*; for if I had been born amongst them, I should have had the same Reason for their Religion, as now I have for my own: The Premises are the same, tho' the Conclusion be never so different. 'Tis still upon the same Grounds, that I profess *Religion*, tho' it be another Religion, which I profess upon these Grounds; So that I can see but very little difference, betwixt being a *Turk* by Profession, and a *Christian* only by Education; which commonly is the *Means and Occasion*, but ought by no means, to be the *Ground* of any Religion. And hence it is, that in my looking out for the *truest Religion*, being conscious to myself how great an ascendant *Christianity* hath over me, beyond the rest, as being that Religion whereinto I was born and baptized, that which the supreme Authority has enjoin'd, and my Parents educated me in, that which every one I meet withal highly approves of, that which I myself have, by a long continued Profession, made almost natural to me; I am resolv'd to be more jealous and suspicious of this Religion, than of the rest, and be sure not to entertain it any longer without being convinc'd, by solid and substantial Arguments of the *Truth and Certainty* of it.

THAT, therefore, I may make diligent and impartial Enquiry into all Religions, and so be sure to find out the best, I shall for a time, look upon myself as one not at all interested in any particular Religion whatsoever, much less in the *Christian Religion*; but only as one who desires, in general, to serve and obey him that made me, in a right manner, and thereby to be made partaker of that Happiness my Nature is capable of. In order to this, it will be necessary to propose to myself some certain *Marks or Characters*, whereby I may be able to judge and make choice of the Religion I intend to embrace: And they are, in general these Two, viz.

FIRST, That is the best Religion, wherein GOD is worshipped and served most like himself, i. e. most suitably and conformably to his Nature and Will. And,

SECONDLY, Since all Men naturally desire, and aspire after Happiness, and our greatest Happiness consists in the Fruition of GOD, that is certainly the best Religion, which gives me the best and most comfortable assurances of being happy with GOD, to all Eternity.

To embrace a Religion without these Marks, wou'd be worse than to have no Religion at all; for better it is, to perform no Worship to GOD, than such as is displeasing to him; to do him no Service, than such as will be ineffectual to make me happy, and not only frustrate my Expectations of Bliss, but make me for ever miserable.

THE Religion, then, that I am to look after, must be such a one, wherein I may be sure to please GOD, and to be made happy with him; and, by consequence, such a one, wherein all the Cause of His Displeasure and my Misery may be remov'd; and that is Sin. For Sin being infinitely opposite to him, as he is a Being of infinite Purity and Holiness, must certainly set me at the greatest Distance from Him, and render me most odious in his Sight; and whatsoever does so, must make me as miserable, as Misery can make me. For as our Holiness consisteth in Likeness, so doth our Happiness in Nearness to GOD: And if it be our Happiness to be near unto him, it must certainly be our Misery to be at a Distance from him. In enjoying him, we enjoy all things, he being and having all things in Himself; and so in not enjoying him, we are not only depriv'd of all that we can enjoy, but made liable to the Punishments that are the Consequence of it.

THAT there is no such thing in Nature, as Virtue and Vice, as Good and Evil, as Grace and Sin, is what I can, by no means, persuade myself to; for my Conscience tells me, that there is: And not only mine, but every one that ever yet liv'd upon the Face of the Earth; All People of whatsoever Nation or Language, still acknowledging Sin to be Sin, and that the Displeasing the Deity, which they worship, is indeed an Evil, that ought to be carefully avoided. And therefore, the very Heathens did not only upbraid others with it, but likewise often check'd

themselves for it: And all Men naturally desire to seem though not to be Holy. But let others say what they will, I, for my own part, cannot but see Sin in myself, by the very Light of Nature. For, my Reason tells me, that if GOD be GOD, He must be just and perfect; and if I be not so too, I am not like Him; and, therefore must needs displease Him; it being impossible any thing should please Him, but what is like unto Him. And this *Deformity* to the Will and Nature of God, is that which we call Sin, or which the Word *Sin*, in its proper Notion, brings into my Mind.

AND being thus conscious to myself, that I have sinned against my Maker, I may reasonably conclude that as He is Omnipotent, and, by consequence, a Witness of these my Offences, so must He likewise be Just in the Punishment of them; for it cannot stand with His Justice, to put up such Offences, without laying suitable Punishments upon the Offender. And these Punishments must be infinite and eternal; For wherein doth the Nature of Divine Justice consist, but in giving to Sin its just Punishments, as well as to Virtue its due Rewards? Now that the Punishment of Sin in this World, is not so much as it deserves, nor, by consequence, as much as, in Justice, ought to be laid upon it, to me is clear, in that every Sin being committed against an infinite GOD, deserves infinite Punishment; whereas all the Punishments we suffer in this World cannot be any more than finite, the World itself being no more than finite, that we suffer them in.

UPON these Grounds, therefore, it is, that I am fully satisfy'd in my Conscience, that I am a Sinner; That it cannot stand with the Justice, nor the Existence of GOD that made me, to pardon my Sins, without Satisfaction made to His Divine Justice for them; and yet, That unless they be pardon'd, it is impossible for me to be happy here, or hereafter. And therefore must I look after some Religion, wherein I may be sure, my Sins may be thus pardon'd, and my Soul made happy, wherein I may please GOD, and GOD may bless Me. Which that I may be the better able to discover, I shall take a brief Survey of all the Religions I ever heard of, or believe to be in the World.

Now, tho' there be as many kinds of Religions as Nations; yea, almost as particular Persons in the World; yet may

may they all be reduced to these Four; the Paganish, Mahometan, Jewish, and Christian Religion.

As to the first, 'tis indeed of a very large Extent, and comprehends under it all such as neither acknowledge Mahomet to be a Prophet, nor expect a promised Messiah, nor believe in a crucified Jesus: And, since 'tis the Majority of Numbers that usually carries the vogue, let me see, whether the Paganish Religion, being farther extended, and more generally profess'd than any, or indeed, all the rest, be not the true Religion, wherein GOD is most rightly worshipp'd, and I may be the most certainly sav'd. And here, when I take a view of this Religion, as it is dispers'd through several Parts of Asia, Africa, and America, I find them very devout in worshipping their Deities, such as they are, and they have great Numbers of them: Some worship the Sun, others the Moon and Stars, others the Earth, and other Elements, Serpents, Trees, and the like. And others again pay Homage and Adoration to Images and Statues, in the Fashion of Men and Women, Hogs, Horses, and other Shapes; and some to the Devil himself, as in Pegu, &c.

BUT now, to go no farther, this seems to me, at first Sight, to be a very strange and absurd sort of Religion; or rather, 'tis quite the Reverse of it. For, the true Notion we have of Religion, is the worshipping the true GOD, in a true manner; and this is the worshipping false Gods, in a false manner. For, I cannot entertain any other Notion of GOD, than as One Supreme Almighty Being, who made and governs all things, and who, as He is a Spirit, ought to be worshipp'd in a spiritual Manner. And therefore, as the very supposing more Deities than one, implies a Contradiction; so the Paying Divine Homage, in a gross, carnal manner, to material and corporeal Beings, which are either the Work of Mens Hands, or, at best, but Creatures like ourselves, which can neither hear nor understand what we say to them, much less give us what we desire of them, is not Religion, but Idolatry and Superstition, or rather Madness and Delusion. So that this Religion, I see, if I should embrace it, would be so far from making me happy, that the more zealous I should be for it, the more miserable I should be by it. For, He that made these things,

cannot but be very angry at me, if I should give that Worship to *them*, which is only due to *Himself*; and so, the way whereby I expect my *Sins* should be *pardon'd*, they would be more *increas'd*; it being a *Sin* against the very Light of *Nature*, to prefer any thing before GOD, or to worship any thing in his stead; Therefore, leaving these to their superstitious *Idolatries*, and diabolical *Delusions*, I must go and seek for the true Religion somewhere else.

TH E next Religion, that hath the most Suffrages and Votes on its side, is the *Mahometan* Religion, so called from one *Mahomet* an *Arabian*, who about a thousand years ago, by the Assistance of one *Sergius*, a *Nestorian Monk*, compiled a Book in the *Arabian Tongue*, which he call'd *Alcoran*, which he made the Rule of his Followers Faith, and Manners, pretending that it was sent from Heaven to him, by the Hand of the Angel *Gabriel*.

THIS Book I have perused, and must confess, find many things in it *agreeable* to right *Reason*; as that there is but one GOD, Gracious, and Merciful, the Lord of the whole Universe; that *this GOD* we are to *resign* ourselves wholly to; that all that *obey* Him shall be certainly *rewarded*, and all that *disobey* Him, as certainly *punish'd*; and the like. But yet, I dare not venture my Soul upon it, nor become one of the Professors of it; because, as there are many things *consonant*, so are there many things *dissonant* to the *natural Light* that is implanted in me; as, that GOD should *swear* by *Figs* and *Olives*, by *Mount Sinai*, as this Book makes him to do, in the Chapter of the *Figs*; that *Solomon* should have an *Army* composed of *Men*, and *Devils*, and *Birds*; and that he should *discourse* with a *Bird*, which acquainted him with the Affairs of the Queen of *Sheba*, and the like.

As to the Argument whereby he wou'd persuade us, that this Book was sent from GOD, viz. That there are no *Contradictions* in it, I take it to be very *false* and *frivolous*. For besides that there are many Books compiled by *Men*, which have no *Contradictions* in them, it is certain, there are a great many plain *Contradictions*, in this Book, which overthrow his Suppositions. Thus, in the Chapter of the *Table*, he saith, that *All that believe in GOD, and the Resurrection of the Dead, and have done Good Works,*

shall

Shall be sav'd; but, in the Chapter of Gratification, he saith,
All that do not believe in the Alcoran shall be destroyed;
 and so in the Chapter of *Hod*. In like manner, he tells us again, in the Chapter of the *Table*, that the Books of the *Old* and *New Testament* were sent from GOD, and, at the same time, supposes, that the *Alcoran* was sent from Him too; which, to me, seems impossible. For, my *Reason* tells me, that GOD, who is *Truth* and *Wisdom* itself, cannot be guilty of *Falshood* or *Contradiction*. And if these Books contradict one another, as, it is evident they do, in many Instances; it is plain, GOD cou'd not be the *Author* of both; and by consequence, if the *Scripture* be true, the *Alcoran* must, of necessity, be false. To instance but in one Particular, the *Alcoran* says, in the Chapter of *Women*, *GOD hath no Son*; the *Scripture*, in *Mat. 3. 17*. GOD said of Jesus, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*: And *Heb. 4. 14*. it expressly calls that Jesus, the *Son of GOD*; and so, in many other things. Now, it is impossible, that both these should be *true*, or, by consequence, that that should be *true*, which says both are so.

BUT if this were granted, there is still another Objection against this Religion; and that is, that the *Rewards* therein promis'd will not avail to make me *happy*, tho' I should be *Partaker* of them. For all the *Promises* made to us in this *Paradise*, are but mere *sensible Pleasures*; as that we shall have all manner of *Herbs*, and *Fruits*, and *Drinks*, and *Women* with exceeding great and black Eyes, as in the Chapter of the *Merciful* and of *Judgment*, and elsewhere; and such Pleasures as these, tho' they may, indeed, affect my *Body*, yet they cannot be the *Happiness* of my *Soul*. Indeed, I know not how this Book should promise any higher Happiness than that of the *Body*, because it shews no *Means* of attaining to it; it shews no *Way*, how my *Sins* may be *pardon'd*, and so my *Soul* made *happy*. It faith, I confess, that GOD is *gracious* and *merciful*, and therefore will *pardon* them; but my *Reason* tells me, that as GOD is *gracious* and *merciful*, and therefore will *pardon* Sin; so is he also *just* and *righteous*, and therefore must *punish* it. And how these two can stand together, is not manifested in the *Alcoran*; and therefore, I dare not trust my *Soul* with it.

THUS, upon diligent Search, have I found the two Religions, that are most generally profess'd, to have little or nothing of Religion in them. I shall, therefore, in the next place, take a View of that Religion, which hath the fewest Followers, and that is the Jewish. A Religion, not establish'd by any Humane Laws, nor, indeed, generally profess'd in any Nation, but only by a Company of despicable People scatter'd up and down the World, which, as the Prophet expresseth it, *are become a Proverb of Reproach, and a By-word among all Nations whither they are driven.* The Principles of this Religion are contain'd in a Book, written in the Hebrew Tongue, which they call the תּוֹרָה Torah, or Law, composed of several Precepts, Promises, and Threatnings; together with Histories of things past, and Prophecies of things to come: This Book, they say, was written by Men inspir'd by GOD himself; and, therefore, they avouch it not to be of a Humane Invention, but merely of Divine Institution.

THIS Book also I have diligently read and examin'd into, and must ingenuously confess, that, at the very first Glance, methought I read Divinity in it, and could not but conclude, from the Majesty of its Style, the Purity of its Precepts, the Harmony of its Parts, the Certainty of its Promises, and the Excellency of its Rewards, that it could be derived from no other Author but GOD Himself. It is here only, that I find my Maker worshipp'd under the proper Notion of a Deity, as He is יְהוָה Jehovah, and that in the right Manner, for we are here command-ed to love and serve him with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, our Might and Mind, Deut. 4. 5. ch. 10. 12. which is, indeed, the Perfection of all true Worship whatsoever. And as GOD is here worshipp'd aright, so is the Happiness which is here entail'd upon this true Worship, the highest that 'tis possible a Creature should be made capable of, being nothing less than the Enjoyment of Him we worship, so as to have Him to be a GOD to us, and our selves to be a People to Him, Jer. 31. 33.

BUT that which I look upon, still, as the surest Character of the true Religion, is, its holding forth the way, how I, being a Sinner, can be invested with this Happiness; or how GOD can shew His Justice, in punishing Sin in itself,

itself, and yet be so Merciful, as to pardon and remit it to me, and so receive me to His Favour; which the Religions I view'd before did not so much as pretend to, nor offer at all at. And this is what this Book of the *Last* does likewise discover to me, by shewing, that GOD Almighty wou'd not visit our Sins upon *ourselves*, but upon another Person; that he would appoint and ordain one to be our *Sponsor* or *Mediator*; who by *His* infinite Merit, should bear and atone for our Iniquities, and so shew His Love and Mercy, in *justifying* and *acquitting* us from our Sins, at the same time that He manifests His Justice, in inflicting the *Punishment* of them upon this Person in our stead. A Method so deep and mysterious, that if GOD Himself had not reveal'd it, I am confident no mortal Man could ever have discover'd or thought of it!

NEITHER are there any Doubts and Scruples concerning this great Mystery, but what this Book does clearly answer and resolve; as will appear more plainly from a distinct Consideration of the several *Objections* that are urg'd against it.

As, 1. That it does not seem agreeable either to Reason or Scripture, that one Man should bear the Sins of another; because every Man has enough to do to bear his own Burden; And since Sin is committed against an infinite God, and therefore deserves infinite Punishment, how can any finite Creature bear this infinite Punishment? especially, it being due to so many Thousands of People as there are in the World!

BUT this Book sufficiently unties this Knot for me, by shewing me, that it is not a mere Man, but GOD Himself, that would bear these my Sins; even He, whose Name is יְהוָה צְדָקָה, The Lord our Righteousness, Jer. 33. 6. where the essential Name of the Most High GOD, which cannot possibly be given to any, but to Him, who is the Being of all Beings, is here given to Him, who should thus bear my Sins, and justify my Person; whence David also calleth him Lord, Psal. 110. 1. Iсаіаb calleth Him The Mighty God, Isa. 9. 6. Yea, and the Lord of Hosts Himself, with His own Mouth, calls Him His Fellow, Zech. 13. 7.

OBJ. 2. But my Reason tells me, GOD is a pure *All*, and, therefore, How can He suffer any Punishments? or, suppose He could, How can one Nature satisfy for the Offences of another? It was Man that stood guilty; and, how can it stand with the Justice of GOD, not to punish Man for the Sins he is guilty of?

To resolve this Doubt, this Holy Book assures me, That this GOD shou'd become *Man*, expressly telling me, that as his Name is *Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty GOD, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, so should he be born a *Child*, and given as a *Son*, Isa. 9. 6. And, therefore, at the same time that the *Lord of Hosts* calls Him his *Fellow*, he calls him a *Man* too, *Against the Man that is my Fellow*, says the *Lord of Hosts*, Zech. 13. 7.

OBJ. 3. But if He be born, as other Men are, He must needs be a Sinner, as other Men be; for such as are born by natural Generation, must necessarily be born also in natural Corruption.

To remove this Obstacle, this Holy Book tells me, that *A Virgin shall conceive and bear this Son, and his Name shall be Emanuel*, Isa. 7. 14. And so being begotten, but not by a sinful *Man*, Himself shall be a *Man*, but not a sinful *Man*: and so being *GOD* and *Man*, He is every way fit to mediate betwixt *GOD* and *Man*, to reconcile *GOD* to Me, and Me to *GOD*, that my Sins may be *pardon'd*, *GOD's Wrath appeas'd*, and so My Soul made happy in the Enjoyment of him.

But there is one thing more yet, that keeps me from settling upon this Religion; and that is, the Expiration of the Time in which this Book promiseth this person should come into the World; for it is expressly said, Dan. 9. 24. that *Seventy Weeks are determin'd upon thy People, and upon thy City, to finish the Transgressions, and to make an End of Sins, and to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, and to seal up the Vision, and the Prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy*. From which Anointing, He is in the next Verse, called *MESSIAH*, the *Anointed*, (under which Name he is, from hence, expected by the Jews) and the Beginning of these Seventy Weeks is expressly said, v. 25. to be at the going forth of the Commandment to build and restore Jerusalem. Now if

if we understand these Seventy Weeks in the largest Sense, for Seventy Weeks, or *Sabbaths of Years*, as it is express'd *Lev. 25. 8.* the Time of the *Messiah's Coming* must have been but 490 Years after the Commandment for the Building of the City; whereas, whether we understand it of the Decree and Command that *Cyrus* made, *2 Chron. 36. 22, 23.* *Ezra 1. 1, 2, 3.* or that which *Darius* made, *Ezra 6.* or that *Artaxerxes* made, *chap. 7.* I say, whichsoever of these Decrees we understand this Prophecy of, it is evident, that it is above 2000 Years since they were all made; and, therefore, the Time of this Person's Coming hath been expired above 1600 Years at least.

So likewise doth this Book of the Law, (as they call it) assure us, that the *Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Law-giver from between his Feet untill Shiloh come,* *Gen. 49. 10.* where the *Jews* themselves, *Jonathan* and *Onkelos*, expound the Word שִׁילּוֹב *Shiloh* by מֶשְׁיחָה *Messiah*; and so doth the *Jerusalem Targum* too. Now, it is plain, that there hath been neither Scepter nor Law-giver in *Judah*, nor any political Government at all among the *Jews*, for above 1600 Years; which plainly shews, either their Prophecies and Expectations of a *Messiah* are false, or that he came into the World so many Ages since, as were here prefixed.

So likewise it was expressly foretold in this Book, that *the Glory of the Second Temple should be greater than the Glory of the Former*, *Hag. 2. 9.* Now the *Jews* themselves acknowledge, that there were Five of the principal things which were in the First, wanting in the Second Temple, viz. 1. The *Ark* with the *Mercy-Seat* and *Cherubim*. 2. The *Shechinah*, or Divine Presence. 3. The *Holy Prophetical Spirit*. 4. The *Urim and Thummim*. 5. The *Heavenly Fire*: And from the want of these Five things they say, the Word אַכְפֵּר *I will be glorified*, *Hag. 1. 8.* wants an ה at the end, which, in Numeration, denotes Five - Yea, and when the very Foundation of the Second Temple was laid, the Old Men, that had seen the First, wept to see how far short it was likely to come of the Former, *Ezra 3. 12.* To make up, therefore, the *Glory of the Second Temple*, to be greater than the *Glory of the First*, notwithstanding the Want of so many glorious things.

things, they must, of Necessity, understand it of the Coming of the *Messiah* into it, who, v. 8. is call'd, *The desire of all Nations*. Whereas the *Jews* themselves cannot but confess, that this Temple hath been demolish'd above 1600 Years; and, therefore, it is impossible for the *Messiah* to come into it, and so for its Glory to be greater than the Glory of the first Temple; and, by consequence, for the Word which they profess to believe in to be true.

INDEED, the Time of the *Messiah's* Coming was so expressly set down in these and the like Places that *Elias* one of their great *Rabbies*, gather'd from hence that the World should last 6000 Years, 2000 without the Law, 2000 under the Law, and 2000 under the *Messiah*, *Sanh. c. 11.* which Computation of the *Messiah's* Coming after 4000 Years, from the Beginning of the World, comes near the Time of the Scepter's Departing from *Judah*, and the End of *Daniel's* Seventy Weeks. Which shews, that this *Rabbi* was fully convinc'd, that it was about that Time that the *Messiah* should come. And therefore it was, likewise, that above 1600 Years ago, the *Jews* did so generally expect His Coming; and that so many did pretend to be the Person, as *Bar-Cozbab*, who about that time, vaunting himself to be the Man, almost the whole Nation unanimously concurr'd in following him; insomuch that, as the *Jews* report, there were no less than 400000, or, as others, 500000 Men slain by *Adrian* the Emperor, in the City *Bitter*, all fighting in Defence of this pretended *Messiah*. There were likewise many others that fancy'd themselves to be the Man, and were esteem'd by some, till manifestly convinc'd of their Error, as we may read in a Book of theirs, call'd *שביסחורה*. And unto this Day many of them hold, that He is already come, but that, by reason of their Sins, He is not yet reveal'd to them.

HENCE it is, that my natural Reason draws me into this Dilemma, That either that Book, which the *Jews* receive as the Word of GOD is indeed not so; or else, that they do not rightly apply it: And so, that either their Religion is a *false* Religion, or else their Profession of it a *false* Profession: And therefore, I must go hence, and seek me some other Religion to fix my Soul upon. Not as if my Reason told me, that *all* the Prophecies that I have

have mention'd here, were false in *themselves*, but only that they appear so to this sort of *Professors*; for, for my own part, I cannot shake off my *Faith* in this *Law*, which they profess to *believe* in; especially, now I have so seriously perused it, and so deliberately weigh'd and consider'd of it. Neither can I believe that ever any *Mahometan* or *Indian*, that did, without Prejudice, set himself to read it through, and to examine every particular, by the Light of unbias'd *Reason*, could say, it was ever hatch'd in a *Humane Brain*; but that it is indeed of a *Heavenly Stamp* and divine Authority. And, therefore, tho' I am forc'd by the Strength of *Reason*, to shake Hands with this Religion, yet the same Reason will not suffer me to lay aside that *Law*, which they do profess, but only their *Profession* of it. So that whatsoever Religion I settle upon, my natural *Conscience* still commands me to stick close to this Book of the *Jewish Law*, and to receive and entertain it, as the Word of the glorious *Jehovah*, the Being of all *Beings*.

W E L L, there is but one Religion more generally profess'd in the World, that I am to search into; which if, upon good Grounds, I cannot fix upon, I shall be the most miserable of all Creatures; and that is, the *Christian Religion*, so nam'd from *JESUS CHRIST*, whose *Doctrine*, *Life*, and *Death*, is recorded by four several Persons, in a Book which they call the *Gospel*. And this Book appears to me to be of *undoubted Authority*, as to the Truth and Certainty of those things that are therein recorded. For, if they had been *false*, both the *Persons* that wrote them, and *He* of whom *they* wrote, had so many *malicious Enemies* ready, upon all occasions to *accuse* them, that they had long ago been *condemn'd* for *Lies* and *Forgeries*. But now, *these Writings* having been extant for above 1600 Years, and never so much as *suspected*, but even, by the *worst* of *Enemies*, acknowledg'd to be a *true Relation* of what pass'd in the World about that time; my *Reason* will not permit me to be their *first Accuser*, but enjoins me to *receive* them, under that Notion, in which they have been brought down to me through so many Generations, without any Interruption whatsoever. For this general Reception on *all hands*, is a sufficient Ground for

me to build my *Faith* upon, as to the *Truth* of the Relation, tho' not a *sufficient* Ground to believe *every* thing contain'd in the Book, to be the Word of GOD Himself: For, in *this* Particular, it is not the Testimony of *others* that I am to build upon, but its own: I may read its *Verity* in *Man's* Testimony, but its *Divinity* only in its own Doctrines.

THIS Book, therefore, I have also diligently perus'd, and find it expresly asserts, that Jesus Christ, whose *Life* and *Death* it records, was indeed that Person, who was long promised by GOD, and *expected* by the *Jews*: And, that all the Prophecies under the Old *Law*, concerning that *Messiah*, God-Man, were actually *fulfilled* in *this* Person; which, if, upon diligent Search, I can find to be *true*, I shall presently subscribe, both with Hand and Heart to *this* Religion. It is a Comfort to me, that it *acknowledgeth* the *Jewish* Law to be sent from GOD; for, truly, if it did not, my Conscience wou'd scarce permit me to give any *Credit* to it; being so fully convinc'd, that *that* Book is indeed of a higher *Extract* than *humane* Invention, and of greater *Authority* than *humane* Institution. And therefore it is, that I cannot, I dare not *believe*, but that every particular *Prophecy* contain'd in it, either *is*, or *shall be*, certainly *fulfill'd*, according to every Circumstance of *Time* and *Place* mention'd therein; and, by consequence, that this *Prophecy*, in particular, concerning the *Messiah's* Coming, is already *past*; the Time wherein it was foretold he should come, being so long ago expir'd. So that I do not now doubt, whether the *Messiah* be *come* or *no*, but whether *this* Jesus Christ, whom this Book of the *Gospel* speaks of, was indeed the Person. And this I shall best find out by comparing the *Christian's* *Gospel* with the *Jewish* Law; or the Histories of Christ under the One, with the Prophecies of the *Messiah* under the Other; still concluding, that if whatsoever was *foretold* concerning the *Messiah*, was *fulfill'd in this* Jesus Christ, then *He* was indeed the *Messiah* that was to come into the World. And, to make this Comparison the more exact, I shall run through the several Circumstances that attended his Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, and shew how punctually the Prophecies were *fulfill'd* in every Particular.

AN D first, for the Birth of the *Messiah*, the *Law* saith, He was to be born of the Seed of Abraham, Gen. 22. 18, and David, 2 Sam. 7. 12. and of the Stem of Jesse, Isa. 11. 1. From whence he is frequently call'd by the Jews, בֶּן־דָּוִיד *The Son of David*. The *Gospel* saith Jesus Christ was the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, Mat. 1. 2. The *Law*, that he was to be born of a Virgin, Isa. 7. 14. The *Gospel*, that Mary, a Virgin, brought forth this Jesus, Mat. 1. 18. Luke 1. 17, 31, 35. chap. 2. 5, 6, 7. The *Law*, that He was to be born at Bethlehem Epbrata, Mic. 5. 2. The *Gospel*, that this Jesus was born there, Mat. 2. 1. Luke 4. 5, 6.

THE *Law* says, that he was to be brought out of Egypt, Hos. 11. 1. The *Gospel*, that Jesus was called thence, Mat. 2. 19, 20. The *Law* saith, that one should go before the *Messiah*, Mal. 3. 5. and should cry in the Wilderness, Isa. 40. 3. The *Gospel*, that John Baptist did so before Christ, Mat. 3. 1, 2. Mark 1. 2, 3. The *Law*, that the *Messiah* should preach the Doctrine of Salvation in Galilee, who sitting before in Darkness, should see great Light, Isa. 9. 1, 2. The *Gospel*, that Jesus did so, Mat. 4. 12, 23. The *Law*, that in the *Messiah's Days*, the Eyes of the Blind should be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf should be unstopp'd, and the Lame leap, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing, Isa. 35. 5, 6. The *Gospel*, that it was so in the Days of Jesus Christ, Mat. 4. 23. chap. 11. 5. But for all these Wonders and Miracles, the *Law* saith, they should bear, but not understand, and see, yet not perceive, Isa. 6. 9. And the *Gospel*, that seeing they did not see, and hearing they did not hear, neither did they understand, Mat. 13. 13. Mark 4. 12. The *Law*, that He should be despised and rejected of Men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief, Isa. 53. 3. The *Gospel*, that Jesus Christ had no where to lay his Head, Mat. 8. 20. His Soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto Death, Mat. 26. 38. yea, He was in an Agony, and His Sweat was as Drops of Blood, Luke 22. 24. so well was He acquainted with Grief. The *Law* saith, that He should ride into Jerusalem upon an Ass, and upon a Colt, the Fole of an Ass, Zech. 9. 9. And the *Gospel*, that Jesus Christ, as he was going to Jerusalem, having found an Ass, sate thereon, John 12. 14. Mat. 21. 6. At which time,

time, the *Law* saith, the People should cry, *Hosannah, blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord*, Psal. 118. 26. The *Gospel*, that the *Multitude* did so to Christ, Mat. 21. 9. The *Law*, that one of his own familiar Friends, in whom He trusted, which did eat of His Bread, should lift up his Heel against Him, Psal. 41. 9. The *Gospel*, that *Judas*, who was one of Christ's Disciples, and so eat of His Bread, did betray Him into the Hands of the *Jews*, Matt. 26. 47. Luke 22. 46. The *Law*, that he should be *prized at, and sold for, thirty Pieces of Silver*, with which should be bought the *Potters Field*, Zech. 11. 12, 13. The *Gospel*, that they covenanted with *Judas*, to betray Jesus for Thirty Pieces of Silver, Matth. 26. 15. with which they afterwards bought the *Potters Field*, chap. 27. 7. The *Law*, that He should be number'd amongst *Transgressors*, Isa. 53. 12. The *Gospel*, that Jesus was crucified betwixt two *Thieves*, Mark 15. 27. Mat. 27. 38. The *Law*, that He should be wounded and bruised, Isa. 53. 5. The *Gospel*, that they scourged Jesus, Mat. 27. 20. and smote Him, Mark 15. 19. The *Law* saith, they should pierce his *Hands and Feet*, Psal. 22. 16. Zech. 12. 10. The *Gospel*, that they crucified Jesus, Mat. 27. 35. Luke 23. which was a *Death*, wherein they used to pierce the *Hands and Feet* of those that were put to Death, and nail'd them to the *Cross*. But though they should pierce his *Flesh*, yet the *Law* saith, they should not break his *Bones*, no not one of them, Exod. 12. 46. Num. 11. 12. Psal. 34. 20. The *Gospel*, that they brake not the *Legs of Christ*, John 19. 33, 36. The *Law*, that they who should see Him, should laugh him to scorn, shoot out their *Lips*, and shake their *Heads*, saying, *He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver Him, let Him deliver Him, seeing he delighted in Him*, Ps. 22. 8. The *Gospel*, that the Scribes and Elders did so to Christ, Mat. 27. 42, 43. The *Law* saith, they should give him *Gall for Meat, and Vinegar to drink*, Ps. 69. 21. And the *Gospel*, that they gave Christ *Vinegar to drink*, mingled with *Gall*, Matth. 27. 34, 48. The *Law*, that they should part his *Garments amongst them, and cast Lots upon his Vesture*, Psal. 22. 19. The *Gospel*, that they parted Jesus's *Garments, casting Lots*, Mat. 27. 34. John 19. 23. Mark 15. 24.

AND

AND as for the Time of this Jesus's Coming into the World, it is certain, that this Jesus came before the second Temple was demolish'd; for it is said, that He went into it, Mat. 19. 45. yea, Himself taught daily in it, ver. 47. by which means the Glory of the second Temple was greater than the Glory of the First, according to the Prophecy, Hag. 2. 9. And as for Jacob's Prophecy, that the Scepter should not depart from Judah, nor the Law-giver, till Shiloh, or the Messiah, came, Gen. 49. 10. it is certain, that it did not depart from Judah, till Herod, by the Senate of Rome, was made King of Judea, in whose Days this Jesus was born, Mat. 2. 1. Luke 1. 5. And so did Daniel's 70 Weeks or 490 Years exactly reach unto, and were determin'd in, the Days of this Jesus, as might easily be demonstrated. So that all the Old Prophecies, concerning the Time of the Messiah's Coming, are perfectly fulfill'd in this Jesus of Nazareth.

BUT farther, the Law faith, that tho' the Messiah should be crucified, yet God would not leave his Soul in Hell, nor suffer his Holy one to see Corruption, Psal. 16. 10. and that when God should make his Soul an Offering for Sin, He should see his Seed, and prolong his Days, Isa. 53. 10. which plainly implies, that tho' the Messiah should die, yet he should rise again, and that within few Days too, otherwise He would have seen Corruption. Now the Gospel faith, that this Jesus rose from the Dead, Mat. 28. 6. Luke 24. 6. and that he was seen of several after his Resurrection, as of Mary Magdalen, Matth. 28. 9. of the eleven Disciples, ver. 16, 17, 18. Mark 16. 14. of the two that were going to Emmaus, Luke 24. 13, 14, 15. of Peter, ver. 34. and of the Disciples that were gather'd together, the Door being shut, John 20. 19. And to be sure it was Himself and not an Apparition, Thomas, one of the Twelve, thrust his Hands into his Side, and found it Flesh and Blood indeed, as before, John 20. 27. And he eat before them, Luke 20. 43. which it is impossible for a Spirit to do; yea. He was seen of above five hundred at one time, 1 Cor. 15. 6. and of Paul himself, ver. 8. Neither did he lie so long as to see Corruption, for he was buried but the Day before the Sabbath, Mark 15. 42. and rose the Day after, chap. 16. 1.

LASTLY, He was not only to rise again, but the *Law* faith, *He was to ascend on high, to lead Captivity captive, and to give Gifts to Men*, Psal. 68. 18. Now this cannot but be an *undoubted character of the Messiah*, not only to rise from the *Dead*, but to *ascend up to Heaven*, and thence to *disperse His Gifts amongst the Children of Men*; and that Jesus did, so, is likewise evident from the *Gospel*; for, *after he had spoken with them, he was received up into Heaven, and there sate at the Right Hand of God*, Mark 16. 19. Luke 24. 51. And he gave such *Gifts to Men*, as that his Disciples, of a sudden, were enabled to *speak all manner of Languages*, Acts 2. 8. to work many *Signs and Wonders*, chap. 5. 12. to *heal all manner of Diseases*, ver. 15, 16. yea, with a *Word speaking, to cure a Man lame from his Mother's Womb*, chap. 3. 6, 7.

THUS the *Gospel* seems to me, to be a perfect *Transcript* of the *Law*, and the *Histories* of Jesus nothing else but the *Prophecies* of Christ turn'd into a *History*. And, when to this I join the consideration of the *Piety* of the *Life* which this Man led, the *Purity* of the *Doctrine* which He taught, and the *Miraculousness* of the *Works* he wrought, I cannot but be farther confirmed in the *Truth* of what is here related. For the *Miracles* which he wrought, as the *Healing of the Sick with a Word of his Mouth, Raising the Dead, feeding so many Thousands with Five Loaves*, and the like, were *powerful and convincing*, that his very *Enemies*, that would not believe him to be the *Messiah*, could scarce deny him to be a *GOD*, *Joseph. Antiq. l. 18. c. 4.* And it is, to this Day, a *Tenet* amongst some of them, that the *Miracles*, which Jesus did, were not the *Delusions and Jugglements of the Devil*, but real *Miracles*, wrought as they say, by the *Virtue of the Name of GOD יְהוָה Jebovah*, which He had gotten out of the *Temple*. By which 'tis plain, they acknowledged *GOD* to be the *Author* of them, which I cannot see how he should be, unless they were *agreeable to his Will, and for the Glory of His Name*.

NEITHER was the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel* only *establis'd at the first*, but likewise *propagated by Miracles afterwards*, as it was necessary it *should be*. For, if it had been propagated *without Miracles*, that itself had been the greatest

greatest *Miracle of all*. It was, no doubt, a great *Miracle*, that a *Doctrine* so much *contrary to Flesh and Blood*, should be *propagated by any means whatsoever*; but a far greater, that it shou'd be *propagated by a Company of simple and illiterate Men*, who had neither *Power to force*, nor *Eloquence to persuade Men to the embracing of it*. For, Who wou'd have thought that such Persons as *these* were, should ever make any of the *Jews*, who expected a *King* for their *Messiah*, to advance them to *Temporal Dignities*, *believe*, that *that Jesus*, whom themselves *scourged and crucified at Jerusalem*, was *the Person*? Or, that *they* should be able to *propagate the Gospel amongst the Gentiles also*, who neither *believ'd in the true GOD*, nor *expected any thing of a Messiah to come and redeem them*? But this *they did*, and brought over, not only *many Persons*, but whole *Nations and Countries* to the *profession of the Gospel*; propagating this most *Holy Doctrine* amongst the most *barbarous and sinful People in the World*, maugre all the *Opposition that the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, could make against it*. Now, can any *Man*, that exerciseth his *Reason*, think they did all this purely by their *own Strength*? No sure, none of these wonderful effects cou'd ever have been produced by any thing less than the *Wisdom, and Power, and Faithfulness of their Lord and Master*, whose *Service* they were engaged in, and who promis'd to be with them *to the End of the World*, Mat. 28. 20. Questionless, it was nothing else but the *Spirit of the most High GOD*, that went along with them, and accompanied the *Word* they preached; otherwise, it never could have made such deep Impression upon the *Hearts of them that heard it*, as not only to command their *Attention*, but to hinder them from *resisting*, when they strove and endeavour'd to do it, the *Power and Authority by which the Disciples spake*.

A N D now, methinks, I begin to perceive this Divine *Spirit* is come upon *me too*, and seems, by its powerful influence, to be working up my *heart* into a thorough persuasion, that it is *Christ*, and *Christ alone*, I am to cast my *Soul* upon; that it is *He alone*, that is the *Way to Life*, and his *Word alone*, the *Word of Life*, which *whoever believes, and is baptiz'd into, shall be sav'd and be*

be that believeth not, shall be damn'd. Away, then, with your *Paganish Idolatries*, your *Mahometan Superstitions*, and *Jewish Ceremonies*; it is the *Christian Religion* alone, that I am resolv'd to live and die in, because 'tis *this* alone, in which I am taught to *worship GOD* aright, to obtain the *Pardon* and *Remission* of my *Sins*, and to be made eternally *happy*. And, since all its *Doctrines* and *Precepts* are contain'd in the *Holy Scriptures*, it is necessary that I should assent unto them, as a standing *Revelation* of *GOD's Will*, and an eternal *Treasure* of *Divine Knowledge*; whereby all, that sincerely believe in *Christ*, may be sufficiently instructed, as well as thoroughly furnish'd, unto every good *Word* and *Work*.

WITHOUT any more ado, therefore, I believe, and am verily persuaded, that all the Books of the ancient *Law*, with all those that have been receiv'd into the *Canon* of the *Scripture* by the *Church of GOD*, since the Coming of *Christ*, which we call the *New Testament*; I say, that all *these Books*, from the Beginning of *Genesis*, to the End of the *Revelations*, are indeed the *Word of the Eternal GOD*, dictated by His Own *Spirit*, unto such as Himself was pleased to employ in the *Writing* of them; and that they contain in them a perfect and complete *Rule of Faith* and *Manners*; upon the due *Observance* of which, I cannot fail of worshipping and serving *GOD*, in such a manner, as will be acceptable to Him here, and of enjoying hereafter *those exceeding great and precious Promises*, that he has reserv'd in *Heaven*, for such as do so.

UNTO these Books, therefore, of the *Law* and *Gospel*, I am resolv'd by his Grace that wrote them, to conform all the ensuing *Articles* of my *Faith*, and all the *Actions* and *Resolutions* of my *Life*. Insomuch that whatsoever I find it hath pleas'd his Sacred Majesty herein to assert, I believe it is my *Duty* to believe; and whatsoever He hath been pleas'd to command me, I believe it is my *Duty* to perform.

ARTICLE III.

I believe, that as there is one GOD, so this one GOD is three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

THIS, I confess, is a *Mystery* which I cannot possibly conceive, yet 'tis a *Truth* which I can easily believe; yea, therefore it is so true, that I can easily believe it, because it is so *high*, that I cannot possibly conceive it; for it is impossible, any thing should be true of the Infinite *Creator*, which can be fully express'd to the Capacities of a finite *Creature*: And, for this Reason, I ever did, and ever shall, look upon those Apprehensions of GOD to be the *truest*, whereby we apprehend Him to be the most *incomprehensible*; and that to be the most *true* of GOD, which seems most impossible unto Us.

UPON this Ground, therefore, it is, that the *Mysteries* of the *Gospel*, which I am less able to *conceive*, I think myself the more obliged to *believe*; especially, this *Mystery* of *Mysteries*, the *Trinity in Unity*, and *Unity in Trinity*, which I am so far from being able to *comprehend*, or indeed to *apprehend*, that I cannot set myself seriously to *think* of it, or to screw up my *Thoughts* a little concerning it, but I immediately *lose* myself, as in a *Trance*, or *Ecstasy*: That GOD the *Father* should be one *perfect* God of *Himself*, GOD the *Son* one *perfect* God of *Himself*, and GOD the *Holy Ghost* one *perfect* God of *Himself*; and yet these *Three* should be but *One perfect GOD of Himself*; so that one should be perfectly *Three*, and *Three* perfectly *one*, that the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* should be *Three*, and yet but *One*; but *One*, and yet *Three*! O Heart-amazing *Thought*-devouring, unconceivable *Mystery*! Who cannot believe it to be *true* of the glorious *Deity*? Certainly, none but such as are able to apprehend it, which, I am sure, I cannot, and believe, no other *Creature* can. And, because no *Creature* can possibly conceive how it should be *so*, I therefore believe it really to be *so*, *viz.* That the *Being* of all *beings* is but *One in Essence*, yet *Three in Substance*; but *One Nature*, yet *Three Persons*; and that those *Three Persons in that One Nature*, tho' absolutely *distinct* from

from one another, are yet but the *same GOD*. And I believe, these Three Persons, in this One Nature, are indeed to one *another* as they are express'd to be to *us*, that the One is really a Father to the Other, that the Other is really a Son to Him, and the Third the Product of Both; and yet, that there is neither First, Second, nor Third amongst them, either in Time, or Nature. So that He that begat was not at all before Him that was begotten, nor he that proceeded from them Both, any whit after either of them. And therefore, that GOD is not term'd Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as if the Divine Nature of the One should beget the Divine Nature of the Second; or the Divine Nature of the First and Second should issue forth the Divine Nature of the Third; (for then there would be three Divine Natures, and so three Gods essentially distinct from one another; by this means also, only the Father would be truly GOD, because he only would be essentially of and from Himself, and the other Two from him.) But what I think myself obliged to believe, is, that it was not the Divine *Nature*, but the Divine *Person* of the Father, which did, from Eternity, beget the Divine *Person* of the Son; and from the Divine *Persons* of the Father and of the Son, did, from Eternity, proceed the Divine *Person* of the Holy Ghost; and so one not being before the other, in Time or Nature, as they are from Eternity Three perfectly distinct Persons, so they are but one co-essential GOD. But dive not, O my Soul, too deep into this bottomless Ocean, this Abyss of Mysteries! 'Tis the Holy of Holies, presume not to enter into it; but let this suffice thee, that he, who best knows Himself, hath avouched it to himself, and therefore thou ought'st to believe it. See Mat. 28. 19. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* And again, 1 John 5. 7. *There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are one.*

ARTICLE IV.

I believe, that I was conceiv'd in Sin, and brought forth in Iniquity; and that, ever since, I have been continually conceiving Mischief, and bringing forth Vanity.

THIS Article of my Faith I must of *necessity* believe, whether I will or no; for if I could *not* believe it to be true, I should therefore have the more Cause to believe it to be so; because unless my Heart was *naturally* very sinful and corrupt, it would be impossible for me *not* to *believe* that which I have so much Cause continually to *bewail*; or, if I do not *bewail* it, I have still the more cause to *believe* it; and, therefore, am *so* much the more persuaded of it, by *how* much the *less* I find myself affected with it. For, certainly, I must be a hard-hearted Wretch indeed, steeped in Sin, and fraught with Corruption to the highest, if I know myself so oft to have incensed the Wrath of the most High GOD against me, as I do, and yet not be sensible of my natural Corruption, nor acknowledge myself to be, by Nature, a Child of Wrath, as well as others. For, I verily believe, that the Want of such a due Sense of myself argues as much Original Corruption, as Murder and Whoredom do actual Pollution. And, I shall ever suspect those to be the most under the Power of that Corruption, that labour most, by Arguments, to divest it of its Power.

AND, therefore, for my own part, I am resolved, by the Grace of G O D, never to go about to *confute* that by *wilful* Arguments, which I find so *true* by *woful* Experience. If there be not a bitter Root in my Heart, whence proceeds so much bitter Fruit in my Life and Conversation? Alas! I can neither set my Head nor Heart about any thing, but I still shew myself to be the sinful Offspring of sinful Parents, by being the sinful Parent of a sinful Offspring. Nay, I do not only betray the in-bred Venom of my Heart, by poisoning my *common* Actions, but even my most *Religious* Performances also, with Sin.

I cannot pray, but I sin; I cannot hear, or preach a Sermon, but I sin; I cannot give an Alms, or receive the Sacrament, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my Sins, but my very Confessions are still Aggravations of them; my Repentance needs to be repented of, my Tears want Washing, and the very Washing of my Tears need still to be wash'd over again with the Blood of my Redeemer. Thus, not only the worst of my Sins, but even the best of my Duties, speak me a Child of *Adam*: Insomuch that whensoever I reflect upon my past Actions, methinks I cannot but look upon my whole Life, from the time of my Conception to this very Moment, to be but as one continued Act of Sin.

AND whence can such a continued Stream of Corruption flow, but from the corrupt Cistern of my Heart? And whence can that corrupt Cistern of my Heart be fill'd, but from the corrupt Fountain of my Nature? Cease, therefore, O my Soul, to gainsay the Power of Original Sin *within* thee, and labour now to subdue it *under* thee. But, why do I speak of my subduing this Sin Myself? Surely, this would be both an Argument of it, and an Addition to it. 'Tis to thee, O my G O D, who art both the Searcher and Cleanser of Hearts, that I desire to make my Moan? 'Tis to thee I cry out in the Bitterness of my Soul, O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death? Who shall? Oh! Who can do it, but Thyself? Arise Thou, therefore, O my GOD, and shew Thyself as infinitely Merciful in the Pardoning, as thou art infinitely Powerful in the Purgings away my Sins.

A R T I C L E V.

I believe, the Son of G O D became the Son of Man, that I, the Son of Man, might become the Son of G O D.

O H! How comfortably does this raise me from the lowest Abasement of Sin and Misery, which I have before acknowledg'd to be my Natural State, to the highest

est Exaltation of Happiness and Glory, in a Spiritual one! This is that great Article of Faith, by which all the Benefits of our Saviour's Death and Passion are made over to me in the new Covenant, and by which, if I perform the Conditions therein requir'd, I shall not only be retriev'd from the Bondage and Corruption that is inherent in me, as a Child of Wrath, but be justified and accepted as the Son of GOD, and be made a Joint-Heir with Christ. This is a Point of the greatest Moment and Concern, which, by the Grace and Assistance of Him of whom I speak, and in whom I thus believe, I shall therefore, be the more exact and particular in the searching and examining into.

Now, when I say, and believe, that GOD became *Man*, I do not so understand it, as if the *Divine* Nature took upon it a *Humane* Person, but that a *Divine* Person took upon him the *Humane* Nature, i. e. it was not the *Divine* Nature, in *general*, without respect to the *Persons*, but *one* of the *Persons* in the *Divine* Nature, which took *Flesh* upon him, and yet, to speak precisely, it was not the *Divine Person* abstracted or distinct from the *Divine Nature*, but it was the *Divine Nature* in that *Person* which thus took upon it the *Humane*. And this was not the First or Third, but the Second Person only in the Sacred Trinity, that thus assumed our Nature; as considering the mysterious Order and OEcconomy of the *Divine Persons*, it seems to be necessary that it should.

FOR, first, the *Father* could not have become this *Son of Man*, because, then, He, that *had* begotten from Eternity, should have *been* begotten in Time; by which means, as he was the *Father* to the *Son*, so would the *Son* also have been the *Father* unto him; and so the Order betwixt the *Father* and the *Son* destroyed.

NOR, secondly, could the *Holy Ghost* have taken our Nature upon him, because the Bond of *Personal Union* betwixt the *Divine* and *Humane Nature*, is from the *Spirit*, (and thence it is, that every one, that is Partaker of Christ's *Person*, is Partaker of his *Spirit* also) which could not be if the *Spirit* itself had been the Person *assuming*. For, I cannot conceive, how the *same Person* could unite itself, by itself, to the *assum'd Nature*: And therefore we read,

that in the Virgin's Conception of our Saviour, it was neither the *Father*, nor the *Son* Himself, but the *Spirit* of the most High, which did overshadow her, Luke 1. 35.

AND, farther, if the *Holy Ghost* had been my *Redeemer*, who should have been my *Sanctifier*? If he had died personally for me, who should have applied his Death effectually to me? That I could not do it *Myself* is, beyond Contradiction, evident; and that either the *Father*, or the *Son*, should do it, is not agreeable to the Nature or Order of the Divine Operations; they, as I believe, never acting any thing *ad extra*, personally, but by the *Spirit* proceeding from them both. And therefore it is, that Christ, to comfort his Disciples after his Death, promiseth them in his Life-time, that he would send them the *Comforter*, John 16. 7. which is the *Spirit of Truth*, ver. 13. He doth not say, He will come again personally, but mystically to them, by his *Spirit*.

BUT now, that the *Spirit*, whose Office it is to apply the Merit and Mediation of God-man to me, could not have done it, if *Himself* had been that *God-man*, seems to me as clear and manifest as the other: For, if He had done it, He should either have done it by the *Father*, by the *Son*, or by *Himself*. He could not do it by the *Father*, nor the *Son*, because he does nothing by them, but all things from them. The *Father* acts in the *Son* by the *Spirit*, the *Son* from the *Father* by the *Spirit*, the *Spirit* from the *Father* and the *Son*. And therefore it likewise follows, that as the *Spirit* could not unite itself before, so neither can it apply itself here, to the *Humane* Nature; for, to assume the *Humane* Nature into the *Divine*, and to apply the *Divine* Nature to the *Humane*, are two distinct Offices, and, therefore, to be performed by two distinct Persons. The first could have been done only by one that was really *Man*, as well as *GOD*; the other, only by one that was merely *GOD*, and not *Man*.

AND that must needs be so; for, otherwise, *GOD* should act upon *Man* by *Man*, by the Person *Man*, as well as *GOD*; and, by Consequence, all the Dispensations, of his Grace, towards us, would have been stopped in the Frailty of the *humane*, though perfect Nature. So that it would have avail'd me nothing, if the *Spirit* had taken my

Nature

Nature upon Him; because, tho' he had assumed the *Humane*, I could not thence have participated of the *Divine* Nature; Nay, therefore I could not have participated of This, because He had assumed That, by which alone I could be brought into this Capacity; and so by this means, I should be farther off than I was before.

AND lastly, as, if the *Father* had become *Man*, there would have been two *Fathers*; so, if the *Spirit* had become *Man*, there would have been two *Sons*, the Second Person begotten from Eternity, and the Third Person begotten in Time. But now, by the *Son's* taking our Nature upon Him, these and far greater Difficulties are avoided, which we might easily perceive, cou'd we sufficiently dive into the Depth of that Wisdom of the *Father*, in sending his *Son*, rather than his *Spirit*, or coming *Himself* in his own Person. Howsoever, to us it cannot but seem most equitable, (if Reason may hold the Balance) that He, who is the *middle Person*, between the *Father* and the *Spirit*, should become the Mediator betwixt *God* and *Man*; and that he, who is the Son of *GOD* in the glorious Trinity, should become the Son of *Man* in his gracious Mystery.

BUT, on the other side, as it was not the Divine *Nature*, but a Divine *Person* that did assume, so neither was it a *Humane Person*, but the *Humane Nature*, that was assumed; for otherwise, if he had assumed the Person of any one *Man* in the World, his Death had been beneficial to none but *him*, whose Person He thus assumed and represented. Whereas, now that He has assumed the *Nature* of *Man* in *general, all*, that partake of *that Nature*, are capable of partaking of the Benefits He purchas'd for us, by dying in our stead. And thus under each *Adam*, as the Representation was universal, so were the Effects design'd to be: *For as in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*, 1 Cor. xv. 22.

AGAIN, When I say, the Son of *GOD* became the Son of *Man*, I do not mean, as if, by this, He should cease to be what He was before, the Son of *GOD*, for He did not leave his *Godhead* to take upon him the *Manhood*; but I believe He took the *Manhood* into his *Godhead*; He did not put off the one to put on the other, but He put one upon the other: Neither do I believe,

that the Humane Nature, when assumed into the Divine, ceased to be Humane; but as the Divine Person so assum'd the Humane Nature as still to remain a Divine Person, so the Humane Nature was so assumed into a Divine Person, as still to remain a Humane Nature: GOD, therefore, so became Man, as to be both perfectly GOD, and perfectly Man, united together in one Person.

I say, in *one* Person; for if he should be **G O D** and **M a n** in *distinct* Persons, this would avail me no more, than if he should be **G O D** only, and not **M a n**, or **M a n** only, and not **G O D**; because the Merit and Value both of his active and passive Obedience is grounded merely upon the Union of the *two* Natures in *one* and the same Person. He, therefore, by His Life and Death, merited so much for us, because the same Person that so liv'd and died, was **G O D**, as well as **M a n**; and every Action that He did, and every Passion that he suffer'd, was done and suffer'd by Him that was **G O D**, as well as **M a n**. And hence it is, that Christ, of all the Persons in the World, is *so fit*, yea, *only fit*, to be my Redeemer, Mediator, and Surety; because He *alone*, is both **G O D** and **M a n** in one Person. If He was not **M a n**, he could not *undertake* that Office; if He was not **G O D**, he could not *perform* it; if he was not **M a n**, He could not be capable of being *bound* for me; if He was not **G O D**, He would not be able to *pay* my *Debt*. It was **M a n** by whom the Covenant was broken; and, therefore, **M a n** must have suitable Punishment laid upon him: It was **G O D** with whom it was broken; and, therefore, **G O D** must have sufficient Satisfaction made unto him: And, as for that Satisfaction, it was **M a n** that had offended, and, therefore, **M a n** alone could make it suitable; it was **G O D** that was offended, and therefore, **G O D** alone could make it sufficient.

THE Sum of all is this: **M a n** can suffer, but he cannot satisfy; **G O D** can satisfy, but he cannot suffer; but Christ being both **G O D** and **M a n**, can both suffer and satisfy too; and so, is perfectly fit both to suffer for **M a n**, and to make Satisfaction unto **G O D**, to reconcile **G O D** to **M a n**, and **M a n** to **G O D**. And thus, Christ having assum'd my Nature into his Person, and so satisfy'd Divine Justice for my

my Sins, I am receiv'd into Grace and Favour again with the most High GOD.

UPON this Principle, I believe, that I, by Nature the Son of *Man*, am made, by Grace, the Son of GOD, as really as Christ, by Nature the Son of GOD, was made by Office, the Son of *Man*: And so, tho' in myself, *I may say to Corruption, thou art my Mother*, yet in Christ, *I may say to GOD, Abba Father*. Neither do I believe this to be a metaphorical Expression, viz. because he doth that for me, which a Father doth for his Child, even provide for me whilst young, and give me my Portion, when come to age; but I believe, that, in the same Propriety of Speech, that my Earthly Father was call'd the Father of my Natural Self, is GOD the Father of my Spiritual Self: For, why was my Earthly Father call'd my Father, but because that I, as to my Natural Being, was born of what proceeded from him, viz. his Seed? Why so, as to my Spiritual Being, am I born of what proceeds from GOD, his Spirit: And as I was not born of the *very* Substance of my Natural Parents, but only of what came from them; so neither is my Spiritual Self begotten again, quickened, and constituted of the *very* Substance of my Heavenly Father, GOD, but of the Spirit, and Spiritual Influences, proceeding from him. Thus, therefore, it is, that I believe, that Christ the Son of GOD, became the Son of *Man*; and thus it is, that I believe myself the Son of *Man* to be made, thereby, the Son of GOD. *I believe, O my GOD and Father, do Thou help mine Unbelief!* and every Day more and more increase my Faith, 'till itself shall be done away, and turned into the most perfect Vision and Fruition of thine own most glorious Godhead!

ARTICLE VI.

I believe, that CHRIST lived to GOD, and died for Sin, that I might die to Sin, and live with GOD.

AND thus, by Faith, I follow my Saviour from the Womb to the Tomb, from His Incarnation to his Death and Passion, believing all that He did or suffer'd, to be for my Sake; for Christ did not only take my *Nature* upon Him, but He *suffered and obeyed*; He underwent *Miseries*, and undertook *Duties*, for me; so that not only his *passive*, but likewise his *active* Obedience unto GOD, in that Nature, was still for me. Not as if I believed, His Duty as *Man*, was not GOD's Debt, by the Law of Creation; Yes; I believe, that He owed *that* Obedience unto GOD, that if he had committed but *one* Sin, and that of the *lightest* Tincture, in all his Life-time, He would have been so far from being able to satisfy for my Sins, that He could not have satisfied for his Own; *For such an High-Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens; who needeth not daily, as those High Priests to offer up Sacrifice, first for his own Sins, and then for the Peoples*, Heb. xxvi. 27. So that if He had not had these Qualifications in their absolute Perfection, He could not have been our High-Priest, nor, by consequence, have made Atonement for, nor expiated any Sins whatsoever. But now, tho' both as Man, and as God-Man or Mediator too, it behoved Him to be thus faithful and spotless; yet, as being GOD coequal and coessential with the Father, it was not out of Duty, but merely upon our Account that He thus subjected His Neck to the Yoke of His own Law; Himself, as GOD, being the Legislator or Law-giver, and so no more under it, than the Father Himself.

AND hereupon it is, that I verily believe, that whatsoever Christ either did or suffered in the Flesh, was meritorious; not that his Life was righteous toward GOD, only that his Death might be meritorious for us, (which

I believe otherwise it could not have been) but that his Life was equally meritorious, as righteous. So that, I believe, my Person is as really accepted, as perfectly righteous, by the Righteousness of his Life imputed to me, as my Sins are pardon'd by GOD, for the Bitterness of the Death he suffered for them; His Righteousness being as really by Faith imputed to me, as my Sins were laid upon Him: As those are set upon *His*, so is that set upon my Score; and so every thing He did in his Life, as well as every thing he suffered in his Death, is mine; by the latter, GOD looks upon me as perfectly *innocent*, and therefore not to be thrown down to Hell; by the former, He looks upon me as perfectly *righteous*, and, therefore, to be brought up to Heaven.

AND, as for His Death, I believe, it was not only as much, but infinitely more, satisfactory to Divine Justice, than though I should have died to Eternity. For, by that means, Justice is actually and perfectly satisfied already, which it could never have been, by my suffering for my Sins myself; for if Justice by that means could ever be satisfied, if it could ever say, *It is enough*; it could not stand with the same Justice, now satisfied, still to inflict Punishment, nor, by consequence, could the Damned justly scorch in the flames of God's Wrath for ever. Neither did the *Death* of my *Saviour* reach only to the *condemning*, but likewise to the *commanding Power* of Sin; it did not only pluck out its *Sting*, but likewise deprive it of its *Strength*; so that He did not only merit by His Death, that I should never die for Sin, but likewise, that I should die to it. Neither did He only merit by his Life, that I should be *accounted* righteous in Him *before GOD*; but likewise that I should be *made* righteous in myself by God. Yea, I believe that Christ by his Death, hath so fully discharged the Debt I owe to God, that now, for the Remission of my Sins, and the Accepting of my Person, (if I perform the Conditions He requires in His Covenant) I may not only appeal to the Throne of Grace, but likewise to the Judgment-seat of GOD; I may not only cry *Mercy, Mercy, O gracious Father, bat Justice, Justice, my righteous God*; I may not only say, Lord, be gracious and merciful, but be just and faithful, to acquit me from

that Debt, and cancel that Bond which my Surety hath paid for me, and which Thou hast promised to accept of; being *not only gracious and merciful, but just and faithful, to forgive me my Sins, and to cleanse me from all Unrighteousness,* 1 John i. 9.

ARTICLE VII.

I believe, that CHRIST rose from the Grave, that I might rise from Sin, and that He is ascended into Heaven, that I may come unto Him.

AS Christ came from Heaven to Earth, so, I believe, He went from Earth to Heaven, and all for the Accomplishment of my Salvation; that, after He had lived a most holy Life, He died a most cruel Death; that He was apprehended, arraign'd, accus'd and condemn'd, by such as could not pronounce the Sentence against him, did not himself, at the same time, vouchsafe them Breath to do it; and that he that came into the World to take away the Sins of it, to bring Sinners to the Joys of Life, was himself by those very Sinners brought into the Pangs of Death. But yet, as it was not in the Power of Death, long to detain the Lord of Life; so, tho' the Worms had Power to send him to the Grave, yet I believe they had not Power or Time to feed upon him there; for *He rose again from the Dead the third Day:* He lay three Days, that I might believe he was not alive, but dead; he rose the third Day, that I might believe, he is not dead, but lives: he descended down to Hell, that he might make full Satisfaction to GOD's Justice for my Sins; but he is now ascended up into Heaven, that he may make Intercession to GOD's Mercy for my Soul: Thither I believe he is gone, and there I believe he is, not as a private Person, but as the Head and Saviour of his Church. And under this Capacity, as I believe that Christ, is there for me, so I am there in him: *For where the Head is, there must the members be also;* that is, I am as really there in him, my Representative now, as I shall be in my own proper

proper Person hereafter; and he is really preparing my Mansion for me there, as I am preparing myself for that Mansion here. Nay, I believe, that he is not only preparing a Mansion for me in Heaven, but that himself is likewise Preparing me for this Mansion upon Earth, continually sending down and issuing forth from himself fresh Supplies and Influences of his Grace and Spirit; and all to qualify me for his Service, and make me meet to be Partaker of his Inheritance with the Saints in Light.

WHICH Inheritance, I believe, he doth not so much desire his Father to bestow upon me, as claims it for me; himself having purchased it with the Price of his own Blood. And as he hath purchased the Inheritance itself, so likewise the Way unto it for me; and, therefore, suest out for the Pardon of those Sins, and subduing those Corruptions, which would make me unworthy of it; and for the Conveyance of those Graces to me, whereby I may walk directly to it; not only saying to his Father, concerning me, as Paul said to Philemon concerning Onesimus, *If this thy Servant oweth thee any thing, set it upon my Account, I will repay it;* but what this thy Servant oweth thee, see, 'tis set upon my Score already; and I have paid it; what Punishments he is indebted to thee, for all the Offences he hath committed against thee, behold I have born them already; see how I have been wounded for his Transgressions, and bruised for his Iniquities; the Chastisement of his Peace was upon me; with My Stripes, therefore, let him be healed, Isa. 53. 5. And thus, as he once shed his Blood for me amongst Men, he now pleads it for me before G O D; and that not only for the Washing out the Guilt of my Transgressions, but likewise for the Washing away the Filth of my Corruptions; himself having purchas'd the Donation of the Spirit from the Father, he there claims the Communication of it unto Me.

AND that he hath thus undertaken to plead my Cause for me, I have it under his own Hand and Seal; himself, by his Spirit, assuring me, that if I Sin, I have an Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the Righteous, 1 John 2. 1. So that I believe, he is not so much my Solicitor at the Mercy-Seat, as my Advocate at the Judgment-

Judgment-Seat of GOD, there pleading my Right and Title to the Crown of Glory, and to every Step of the Way that I must go thro' the Kingdom of Grace unto it. In a word, I believe that Christ, upon Promise and Engagement to pay such a Price for it in Time, did purchase this Inheritance for me from Eternity; whereupon, I was even then immediately chosen and elected into it; and had, by this means, a Place in Heaven, before I had any Being upon Earth: And when the Time appointed, by Covenant, was come, I believe Christ, according to his Promise, paid the purchase Money, even laid down his Life for me; and then forthwith went up and took Possession of this my Kingdom, not for Himself, but for me, as my Proxy and Representative: So that whilst I am in my Infancy, under Age, I am in Possession, tho' I have not as yet the Enjoyment of this my Inheritance; but that is reserved for me 'till I come at Age. And howsoever, tho' I do not enjoy the Whole as yet, my Father allows me as much of it as He sees convenient, so much Grace and so much Comfort as He thinks best; which are as a Pledge of what He hath laid up for me in His Kingdom which is above.

ARTICLE VIII.

*I believe, that my Person is only justified by the Merit of
CHRIST imputed to me; and that my Nature is only
sanctified by the Spirit of CHRIST implanted in me.*

AND thus I do not only ~~believe~~ Christ to be my Saviour, but I believe *only* Christ to be my Saviour. 'Twas He alone that *trod the Wine-press of his Father's Wrath*, filled with the four and bitter Grapes of my Sins. 'Twas He that carried on the great Work of my Salvation, being Himself both the *Author and the Finisher* of it. I say, it was He, and He alone; for what Person or Persons in the World could do it, besides Himself; the Angels could not if they would, the Devils would not if they could; and as for my Fellow-Creatures, I may as well satisfy for their Sins, as they for mine; and how little

little able even the best of us are to do either, i. e. to atone either for our own Transgressions, or those of others, every Man's Experience will sufficiently inform him. For, how should we poor Worms of the Earth, ever hope, by our Slime and Mortar, (if I may so speak) of our own Natural Abilities, to raise up a Tower, whose Top may reach Heaven? Can we expect, by the Strength of our own Hands, to take Heaven by Violence? or by the Price of our own Works, to purchase eternal Glory? 'Tis a Matter of Admiration to me, how any one, that pretends to the Use of his Reason, can imagine, that he should be accepted before GOD for what comes from himself? For, how is it possible, that I should be justified by Good Works, when I can do no Good Works at all before I be first justified? My Works cannot be accepted as good, 'till my Person be so; nor can my Person be accepted by GOD, 'till first engrafted into Christ; before which Engrafting into the true Vine, 'tis impossible I should bring forth good Fruit; for the Ploughing of the Wicked is Sin, says Solomon, Prov. xxi. 4. yea, the Sacrifices of the Wicked are an Abomination to the Lord, chap. xv. 8. And if, both the Civil and Spiritual Actions of the Wicked be Sin, Which, of all their Actions, shall have the Honour to justify them before God? I know not how it is with others, but for my own part, I do not remember, neither do I believe, that I ever prayed, in all my Life-time, with that Reverence, or heard with that Attention, or received the Sacrament with that Faith, or did any other Work whatsoever, with that pure Heart, and single Eye, as I ought to have done. Insomuch that I look upon all my Righteousness as filthy Rags; and 'tis in the Robes only of the Righteousness of the Son of GOD, that I dare appear before the Majesty of Heaven. Nay, suppose I could, at length, attain to that Perfection, as to do Good Works, Works exactly conformable to the Will of GOD, yet they must have better Eyes than I, that can see how my Obedience in one kind, can satisfy for my Disobedience in another; or, how that which GOD commands from me, should merit any thing from Him.

No, I believe there is no Person can merit any thing from GOD, but he that can do more than is required of him; which it is impossible any Creature should do. For, in that it is a *Creature*, it continually depends upon GOD, and, therefore, is bound to do every thing it can, by any means, possibly to do for him; especially, considering, that the Creature's Dependance upon GOD is such, that it is behoden to Him even for every Action that issues from it; without whom, as it is impossible any thing should *be*, so likewise that any thing should *act*, especially, what is good. So that, to say, a Man of *himself* can merit any thing from GOD, is as much as to say, that he can merit by that which of *himself* he doth *not* do; or that one Person can merit by that which another performs, which is a plain Contradiction. For in that it merits, it is necessarily imply'd, that itself acts that by which it is said to merit, but in that it doth not depend upon itself, but upon another, in what it acts, it is as necessarily imply'd, that itself doth not do that by which it is said to merit.

UPON this Account, I shall never be induced to believe, that any Creature, by any thing it doth, or can do, can merit or deserve any thing at the Hand of GOD, 'till it can be proved, that a Creature can merit by that which GOD doth; or that GOD can be bound to bestow any thing upon us, for that which himself alone is pleased to work in us, and by us; which, in plain Terms, would be as much as to say, That because GOD hath been pleas'd to do one good Turn for us, he is therefore bound to do more; and, because GOD hath enabled us to do our Duty, he should therefore be bound to give us Glory.

'Tis not, therefore, in the Power of any Person in the World, to merit any thing from GOD, but such a one who is absolutely coessential with him, and so depends not upon Him, either for his Existence or Actions. And, as there is no Person can merit any thing from GOD, unless he be essentially the same with him, so likewise, unless he be personally distinct from him; forasmuch as, tho' a Person may be said to merit *for* himself, yet he cannot be said, without a gross Solecism, to merit any thing *from* himself. So that he that is not as perfectly another Person

Person from G O D, as really the same in Nature with him, can never be said to merit any Thing at His Hands.

BUT farther, G O D the Father could not properly be said to do it in his own Person, because, being (according to our Conception) the Party offended, should He have undertaken this Work for me, He, in His own Person, must have undertaken to make Satisfaction to His own Person, for the Offences committed against Himself; which if he should have done, his Mercy might have been much exalted, but his Justice could not have been satisfied by it. For Justice requires, either that the Party offended should be punished for these Offences, or, at least, some fit Person in his stead, which the Father himself cannot be said to be, in that he was the Party offended, to whom this Satisfaction was to be made; and 'tis absurd to suppose, that the same Person should be capable of making Satisfaction, both by and to himself, at the same time.

IT remains, therefore, that there were only *Two Persons* in the Holy Trinity, who could possibly be invested with this Capacity; the *Son*, and the *Spirit*: As to the latter, tho' he be indeed the *same in Nature* with the *Father*, and a *distinct Person* from him, and so far in a Capacity to make Satisfaction to him; yet not being capable both of *assuming* the *Humane Nature* into the *Divine*, and also *uniting* and *applying* the *Divine Nature* to the *Humane*, (as I have shewed before, in the fifth Article) He was not in a Capacity of making Satisfaction for *Man*; none being fit to take that Office upon him, but he that, of himself, was perfectly *GOD*, and likewise capable of becoming perfectly *Man*, by uniting *both Natures* in the *same Person*; which the *Holy Ghost* could not do, because he was the *Person by whom*, and therefore could not be the *Person also in whom*; this Union of the two Natures was to be perfected. And yet, it was by this means, and this Method only, that any Person could have been completely capacitated to have born the Punishment of our Sins: He that was only *Man* could not do it, because the Sin was committed against *G O D*; and He that was only *GOD*

GOD could not do it, because the Sin was committed by *Man*.

FROM all which, as I may fairly infer, so, I hope, I may safely fix, my *Faith* in this Article, viz. That there was only one Person in the whole World, that could do this great Work for me, of justifying my Person before GOD, and so glorifying my Soul with Him; and that was the Son of GOD, the Second Person in the glorious Trinity, begotten of the Substance of the Father from all Eternity; whom I apprehend and believe to have brought about the great Work of my *Justification* before GOD, after this or the like manner.

HE being, in and of *Himself*, perfectly coequal, co-essential, and coeternal with the *Father*, was, in no sort, bound to do more than the *Father* Himself did; and so whatsoever *He* should do, which the *Father* did not, might justly be accounted as a Work of Supererogation; which, without any Violation of Divine Justice, might be set upon the Account of some other Persons, even of such whom *He* pleas'd to do it for. And hereupon out of Mercy and Compassion to fallen *Man*, *He* covenants with His Father, that if it pleas'd His Majesty to accept it, *He* would take upon Him the Suffering of those Punishments which were due from *Him* to *Man*, and the Performance of those Duties which were due from *Man* to *Him*: so that whatsoever *He* should thus humble Himself to do or suffer, should wholly be upon the Account of *Man*, Himself not being any ways bound to do or suffer more in *Time*, than *He* had from *Eternity*.

THIS Motion, the *Father*, out of the Riches of His Grace and Mercy, was pleas'd to consent unto: And hereupon, the Son assuming our Nature into His Deity, becomes subject and obedient both to the Moral and Ceremonial Laws of His *Father*; and, at last, to Death itself, even the *Death of the Cross*. In the one, He paid an *Active*, in the other a *Passive* Obedience; and so did not only fulfil the Will of His Father, in obeying what He had commanded, but satisfy'd his Justice in suffering the Punishment due to us for the transgressing of it. His *Active* Obedience, as it was infinitely pure and perfect, did, without doubt, infinitely transcend all the Obedience of the Sons

Sons

Sons of Men, even of *Adam* too in his primitive State. For, the Obedience of *Adam*, make the best of it, was but the Obedience of a finite Creature; whereas the Obedience of Christ was the Obedience of one that was infinite GOD, as well as Man. By which means, the Laws of GOD had higher Obedience perform'd to them, than themselves, in their primitive Institution, requir'd; for being made only to finite Creatures, they could command no more than the Obedience of finite Creatures; whereas the Obedience of Christ was the Obedience of one who was the infinite *Creator*, as well as a finite Creature.

Now, this Obedience being more than Christ was bound to, and only perform'd upon the account of those whose Nature he had assumed; as we, by Faith, lay hold upon it, so GOD, through Grace, imputes it to us, as if it had been perform'd by us in our own Persons. And hence it is, that as, in one place, Christ is said to be *made Sin for us*, 2 Cor. v. 21. so, in another place, He is said to be *made our Righteousness*, 1 Cor. i. 30. And in the fore-cited Place, 2 Cor. v. 21. as He is said to be *made Sin for us*, so we are said to be *made Righteousness* in Him: But what Righteousness? Our own? No, *The Righteousness of GOD*, radically His, but imputatively ours: And this is the only way, whereby we are said to be *made the Righteousness of GOD*, even by the Righteousness of Christ's being made ours, by which we are accounted and reputed as Righteous before GOD.

THESE things consider'd, I very much wonder, how any Man can presume to exclude the *Active Obedience* of Christ from our *Justification* before GOD; as if what Christ did in the Flesh, was only of *Duty*, not at all of *Merit*; or, as if it was for *Himself*, and not for *Us*. Especially, when I consider, that suffering the *Penalty* is not what the *Law* primarily requireth; for the *Law* of GOD requires perfect *Obedience*, the *Penalty* being only threatened to (not properly requir'd of) the *Breakers* of it. For, let a Man suffer the *Penalty* of the *Law* in never so high a manner, he is not therefore accounted obedient to it; his *Punishments* doth not speak his *Innocence*, but rather his *Transgression* of the *Law*.

HENCE.

HENCE it is, that I cannot look upon Christ, as having made full Satisfaction to GOD's Justice for me, unless He had performed the Obedience I owe to GOD's Laws, as well as born the Punishment that is due to my Sins: for tho' he should have born my Sins, I cannot see how that could denominate me Righteous or Obedient to the Law, so as to entitle me to eternal Life, according to the Tenor of the Old Law, *Do this and live.* Lev. 18.

5. Which old Covenant is not disannull'd or abrogated by the Covenant of Grace, but rather established, Rom. 3. 31. especially as to the Obedience it requires from us, in order to the Life it promiseth; otherwise, the Laws of GOD would be mutable, and so come short of the Laws of the very *Medes* and *Persians*, which alter not. Obedience, therefore, is as strictly required under the New, as it was under the Old Testament, but with this Difference: there, Obedience in our own Persons was requir'd as absolutely necessary, here, Obedience in our Surety is accepted as completely sufficient.

BUT now, if we have no such Obedience in our Surety, as we cannot have, if he did not live, as well as die, for us let any one tell me, what Title he hath, or can have, to eternal Life? I suppose, he'll tell me, he hath none in himself, because he hath not perform'd perfect Obedience to the Law. And I tell him, he hath none in Christ, unless Christ performed that Obedience for him, which none can say he did, that doth not believe his active as well as passive Obedience, to be wholly upon our Account.

AND now I speak of Christ's being our Surety, as the Apostle calls him, *Heb. 7. 22.* methinks, this gives much Light to the Truth in hand: For, what is a Surety, but one that undertakes to pay whatsoever he, whose Surety he is, is bound to pay, in case the Debtor prove non-solvent, or unable to pay it himself? And thus is Christ, under the Notion of a Surety, bound to pay whatever we owe to GOD, because we ourselves are not able to pay it in our own Persons.

NOW, there are two things that we owe to GOD, which this our Surety is bound to pay for us, viz. First; and principally, Obedience to his Laws, as he is our

Creator

Creator and Governor; and, *Secondly*, By Consequence, the Punishment that is annex'd to the Breach of these Laws, of which we are Guilty. Now, though Christ should pay the *latter* part of our Debt for us, by bearing the *Punishment* that is due unto us; yet, if he did not pay the *former* and principal Part of it too, *i. e.* perform the *Obedience* which we owe to GOD, he would not fully have perform'd the Office of Suretyship, which he undertook for us; and so would be but a Half-Mediator, or Half-Saviour, which are such Words, as I dare scarce pronounce, for fear of Blasphemy.

So that, tho' it is the *Death* of Christ by which I believe my *Sins* are pardon'd; yet, it is the *Life* of Christ, by which I believe my *Person* is accepted. His *Passions* GOD accounts as *suffer'd* by me, and therefore, I shall not die for *Sin*: His *Obedience* GOD accounts as *perform'd* by me, and therefore, I shall live with him. Not as if I believed, that Christ so performed Obedience for me, that I should be discharged from my Duty to him; but only, that I should not be *condemn'd* by GOD, in not discharging my Duty to him, in so strict a manner, as is requir'd. I believe that the active Obedience of Christ will stand me in no stead, unless I endeavour after sincere Obedience in mine own Person; his, Active, as well as his Passive Obedience, being imputed unto none, but only to such, as apply it to themselves by Faith; which Faith in Christ will certainly put such as are possessed of it upon Obedience unto GOD. This, therefore, is the Righteousness, and the manner of that Justification, whereby I hope to stand before the Judgment-Seat of GOD; even by GOD's imputing my *Sins* to Christ, and Christ's *Righteousness* to me; looking upon me as one not to be punish'd for my Sins, because Christ hath suffer'd, but to be receiv'd into the Joys of Glory, because Christ hath perform'd Obedience for me, and does, by Faith, through Grace, impute it to me.

And thus, it is into the *Merit* of Christ, that I resolve the whole Work of my Salvation; and this, not only, as to that which is wrought without me, for the *Justification* of my *Person*, but likewise as to what is wrought within me for the *Satisfaction* of my *Nature*. As I can not

not have a Sin *pardon'd* without Christ, so neither can I have a Sin *subdu'd* without Him; neither the Fire of GOD's Wrath can be quenched, nor yet the Filth of my Sins washed away, but by the Blood of Christ.

So that I wonder as much at the Doctrine that some Men have advanced concerning Free-will, as I do at that which others have broached in Favour of Good Works; and 'tis a Mystery to me, how any that ever had Experience of GOD's Method in working out Sin, and planting Grace in our Hearts should think they can do it by themselves, or any thing in order to it. Not that I do, in the least, question, but that every Man may be saved that will; (for this, I believe, is a real Truth) but I do not believe, that any Man of himself can will to be saved. Wheresoever GOD enables a Soul effectually to will Salvation; He will certainly give Salvation to that Soul; but, I believe, it is as impossible for my Soul to will Salvation, of himself, as to enjoy Salvation without GOD.

AND this my Faith is not grounded upon a roving Fancy, but the most solid Reasons; Forasmuch as of ourselves, we are not able, in our *Understandings*, to discern the *Evil* from the *Good*; much less, then, are we able, in our *Wills*, to prefer the *Good* before the *Evil*; the *Will* never settling upon any thing, but what the *Judgment* discovers to it. But now, that my natural Judgment is unable to apprehend and represent to my Will, the true and only *Good* under its proper notion, my own too sad Experience would sufficiently persuade me, though I had neither Scripture, nor Reason for it. And yet, the Scripture also is so clear in this Point, that I could not have denied it, though I should never have had any Experience of it; the most High expressly telling me, that the *natural Man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of GOD, for they are Foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. ii. 14. *Neither can he know them, i. e.* There is an absolute Impossibility in it, that any one remaining in his Natural Principles, without the Assistance of GOD, should apprehend or conceive the Excellency of Spiritual Objects. So that a Man may as soon read the Letter of the Scripture without Eyes, as understand the Mysteries of the Gospel without Grace.

And

Thoughts on Religion.

51

And this is not at all to be wondered at; especially, if we consider the vast and infinite Disproportion betwixt the Object and the Faculty; the *Object* to be apprehended being nothing less than the best of Beings, GOD; and the *Faculty* whereby we apprehend it, nothing more than the Power of a *finite* Creature, polluted with the worst of Evils, *Sin*.

So that, I believe, it a thousand times easier for a Worm, a Fly, or any other despicable Insect whatsoever, to understand the Affairs of Men, than for the best of Men, in a Natural State, to apprehend the Things of God. No; there is none can know God, nor, by Consequence, any thing that is really good, but only so far as they are Partakers of the Divine Nature: We must, in some measure, be like to GOD, before we can have any true Conceptions of Him, or be really delighted with Him: We must have a *spiritual Sight*, before we can behold *spiritual Things*; which every *natural* Man being destitute of, he can see no Corneliness in Christ, why He should be desired; nor any Amiability in *Religion*, why it should be embraced.

AND hence it is, that I believe, the first Work which God puts forth upon the Soul, in order to its Conversion, is, to raise up a *spiritual Light* within it, to clear up its Apprehensions about *spiritual Matters*, so as to enable the Soul to look upon GOD as the chiefest Good, and the Enjoyment of Him as the greatest Bliss; whereby the Soul may clearly discern betwixt *Good* and *Evil*, and evidently perceive, that nothing is *Good*, but so far as 'tis like to GOD; and nothing *Evil*, but so far as it resembles *Sin*.

BUT this is not all the Work that God hath to do upon a sinful Soul, to bring it to Himself; for tho' I must confess that in Natural Things, the Will always follows the ultimate Dictates of the Understanding, so as to chuse and embrace what the Understanding represents to it, under the comely Dress of *good* and *amiable*, and to refuse and abhor whatever, under the same Representation, appears to be *evil* and *dangerous*; I say, tho' I must confess, 'tis so in *natural*, yet I believe, 'tis not so in *spiritual Matters*. For, tho' the *Understanding* may have never such clear Apprehensions of *spiritual Good*, yet the *Will* is not at all affected with it, without the joint Operations

rations of the Grace of GOD upon us; All of us too sadly experiencing what St. Paul long ago bewail'd in himself, that *what we do, we allow not*, Rom. 7. 15. that tho' our Judgments condemn what we do, yet we cannot chuse but do it; tho' our Understandings clearly discover to us the Excellency of Grace and Glory, yet our Wills, overpower'd with their own Corruptions, are strangely hurry'd into Sin and Misery. I must confess, it is a Truth which I should scarcely have ever believed, if I had not such daily Experience of it: But alas! there is scarce an Hour in Day, but I may go about lamenting, with Medea, in Seneca, *Video meliora, proboque; deteriora sequor*: Tho' I see what is good, yea, and judge it to be the Better, yet I very often chuse the Worse.

AND the Reason of it is, because, as by our Fall from GOD, the whole Soul was desperately corrupted; so it is not the rectifying of one Faculty, which can make the Whole straight; but as the Whole was changed from Holiness to Sin, so must the Whole be changed again from Sin to Holiness, before it can be inserted into a State of Grace, or so much as an Act of Grace to be exerted by it.

Now, therefore, the Understanding and Will being two distinct Faculties, or, at least, two distinct Acts in the Soul, it is possible for the Understanding to be so enlightened, as to prefer the Good before the Evil, and yet for the Will to remain so corrupt, as to chuse the Evil before the Good. And hence it is, that where GOD intends to work over a Soul to himself, he doth not only pass an enlightening Act upon the Understanding and its Apprehensions, but likewise a sanctifying Act upon the Will and its Affections, that when the Soul perceives the Glory of GOD, and the Beauty of Holiness, it may presently close with, and entertain it with the choicest of its Affections. And without GOD's thus drawing it, the Understanding could never allure the Soul to Good.

AND therefore it is, that for all the clear Discoveries which the Understanding may make to itself concerning the Glories of the invisible World, yet GOD assures us, 'tis Himself alone that affects the Soul with them, by inclining its Will to them; for it is GOD, which worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good Pleasure, Phil. 2. 13. So that,

that, tho' GOD offer Heaven to all that will accept of it, in the Holy Scriptures; yet none can accept of it, but such whom himself stirs up by his Holy Spirit, to endeavour after it. And thus we find it was in *Israel's Return from Babylon to Jerusalem*, tho' King *Cyrus* made a Proclamation, that whosoever would might go up to worship at the Holy City, *Ezra i. 3.* yet there was none that accepted of the Offer, but those whose Spirit GOD had raised to go up, ver. 5. So here, tho' GOD doth, as it were, proclaim to all the World, that whosoever will come to Christ shall certainly be saved, yet it doth not follow, that all shall receive Salvation from him, because it is certain, all will not come; or rather, none can *will* to come unless GOD enable them.

I AM sure, to say none shall be saved, but those that *will* of themselves, would be sad News for me, whose *Will* is naturally so *backward* to every thing that is *good*. But this is my Comfort, I am as certain, my Salvation is of GOD, as I am certain, it cannot be of myself. 'Tis Christ who voachsafed to die for me, who hath likewise promised to live within me; 'tis He that will work all my Works, both *for me*, and *in me* too. In a Word, 'tis to him I am beholden, not only for my *spiritual* Blessing, and Enjoyments, but even for my *temporal* ones too, which, in and through His Name, I daily put up my Petitions for. So that I have not so much as a Morsel of Bread, in Mercy, from GOD, but only upon the Account of Christ; not a Drop of Drink, but what flows unto me in his Blood. 'Tis he that is the very Blessing of all my Blessings, without whom my very Mercies would prove but Curses, and my Prosperity would but work my Ruin.

Whither, therefore, should I go, my dear and blessed Saviour, but unto thee? Thou hast the Words of eternal Life. And how shall I come, but by Thee? Thou hast the Treasures of all Grace. O thou, that hast wrought out my Salvation for me, be pleas'd likewise to work this Salvation in me; Give me, I beseech thee, such a Measure of thy Grace, as to believe in Thee here upon Earth: and then give me such Degrees of Glory, as fully to enjoy Thee for ever in Heaven.

ARTICLE IX.

I believe, GOD enter'd into a double Covenant with Man, the Covenant of Works made with the first, and the Covenant of Grace made in the second Adam.

THAT the most High GOD should take a Piece of Earth, work it up into the Frame and Fashion of a Man, and *breathe into his nostrils, the Breath of Life*, and then should enter into a Covenant with it, and should say, *Do this and live*, when Man was bound to do it, whether he could live by it or no, was, without doubt, a great and amazing Act of Love and Condescension; but that, when this Covenant was unhappily broken by the first, GOD should instantly vouchsafe to renew it in the second *Adam*; and that too upon better Terms, and more easy Conditions than the former, was yet a more surprizing Mercy: For, the same Day that *Adam* eat of the Forbidden Fruit, did GOD make him this Promise, That *the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head*, Gen. iii. 15. And this Promise he afterwards explain'd and confirm'd by the Mouth of His Prophet *Jeremy*, saying, *This is the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel, after those days; I will put my Law into their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts; And I will be to them a GOD, and they shall be to Me a People*, Jer. xxxi. 33. And again, by St. Paul, under the New Testament, almost in the self-same Words, *Heb. viii. 10.*

A Covenant so gracious and condescending, that it seems to be made up of nothing else but Promises. The *first* was, properly speaking, a Covenant of Works, requiring, on Man's Part, a perfect and unfinning Obedience, without any extraordinary Grace or Assistance from GOD, to enable him to perform it; but here, in the *second*, GOD undertakes both for Himself and for Man too, having digested the Conditions to be perform'd by us, into Promises to be fulfilled by Himself, *viz.* That He will not only *pardon* our *Sins*, if we do *repent*, but that He will give us *Repentance*, that so we may deserve His Pardon; that He will not only give us *Life*, if we come to Christ, but

but even draw us to Christ, that so he may give us *Life*; and so, not only make us *happy*, if we will be *holy*, but make us *holy*, that so we may be *happy*: For the Covenant is, not that *He will be our GOD*, if we will be *His People*, but *He will be our GOD, and we shall be His People*. But still, all this is in and through Christ, the Surety and Mediator of this Covenant, in whom all the *Promises are Yea and Amen*, 2 Cor. i. 20. So that Christ may be looked upon, not only as a Surety, but as a Party in this Covenant of *Grace*, being not only *bound to GOD*, but likewise *covenanting with Him for us*. As *God-Man* He is a Surety *for us*, but as *Man* he must needs be a Party *with us*, even our Head in the Covenant of *Grace*, as *Adam was in the Covenant of Works*.

WHAT therefore, tho' I can do nothing in this Covenant of *myself?* yet this is my Comfort, that He hath undertaken for me, who can do all things. And therefore is it called a Covenant of *Grace*, and not of *Works*, because in it there is no Work required from me, but what by *Grace*, I shall be enabled to perform.

AND as for the Tenor in which this Covenant runs, or the *Habendum* and *Grant* which each Party covenants for, it is express in these Words, *I will be your GOD, and you shall be My People*, GOD covenants with us, that we shall be His People; we covenant with GOD, that He shall be our GOD. And, what can GOD stipulate more to us, or we restipulate more to him, than this? What doth not GOD promise to us, when he promises to be our GOD? and what doth he not require from us, when he requires us to be his People.

First, HE doth not say, I will be your *Hope*, your *Help*, your *Light*, your *Life*, your *Sun*, your *Shield*, and your exceeding great *Reward*; but I will be your *God*, which is ten thousand times more than possibly can be couched under any other Expressions whatsoever, as containing under it, whatsoever God is, whatsoever God hath, and whatsoever God can do. All his essential Attributes are still engag'd for us; we may lay claim to them, and take hold on them: So that what the Prophet saith of his Righteousness and Strength, *Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength*, Isa. xlvi. 24. I

may extend to all His other Attributes, and say, Surely in the L o r d have I Mercy to *pardon* me, Wisdom to *instruct* me, Power to *protect* me, Truth to *direct* me, Grace to *crown* my Heart on Earth, and Glory to *crown* my Head in Heaven: And if what He *is*, then, much more, what He *bath*, is here made over by Covenant to me. *He that spared not his own Son, faith the Apostle, but delivered Him up for us all; how shall He not but with Him likewise freely give us all things?* Rom. viii. 32. But what hath G O D to give me? Why, all He hath is briefly summed up in this short Inventory; whatsoever is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, is His; and that this Inventory is true, I have several Witnesses to prove it, *Melchizedech*, Gen. xiv. 19. and *Moses*, Deut. x. 14. and *David*, 1 Chron. xxix. 11. Indeed, Reason itself will conclude this, That He that is the Creator and Preserver, must, of Necessity be the Owner and Possessor, of all things; so that let me imagine what possibly I can, in all the World, I may with the Pen of Reason, write under it, *This is G O D's*; and if I take but the Pen of Faith with it, I may write, *This is mine in Jesus Christ.*

A s for Example; Hath He a *Son*? He hath died for me. Hath He a *Spirit*? It shal! live within me. Is *Earth* His? It shall be my Provision. Is *Heaven* His? It shall be my Portion. Hath He *Angels*? They shall guard me. Hath He *Comforts*? They shall support me. Hath He *Grace*? That shall make me holy. Hath He *Glory*? That shall make me happy. *For the Lord will give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will He withhold from those that walk uprightly*, Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

A N D as He is nothing but what He is unto *us*, so He doth nothing but what He doth for us. So that whatsoever G O D doth by his ordinary Providence, or (if our Necessity requires) whatsoever He can do by his extraordinary Power, I may be sure, He doth and will do for me. Now He hath given Himself to me, and taken me unto Himself, what will He not do for me that He can? And what can He not do for me that He will? Do I want Food? G O D can drop down *Manna* from the Clouds, Exod. xvi. 4. or bid the Quails come down and feed me with their own Flesh, as they did the *Israelites*, ver. 13.

or

or He can send the Ravens to bring me Bread and Flesh, as they did the Prophet *Elijah*, 1 King. xvii. 6. Am I thirsty? God can broach the Rocks, and dissolve the Flints into Floods of Water, as he did for *Israel*, Deut. viii. 25. Am I cast into a fiery Furnace? He can suspend the Fury of the raging Flames, as He did for *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, Dan. iii. 23. Am I thrown among the devouring Lions? He can stop their Mouths, and make them as harmless Lambs, as He did for *Daniel*, Dan. vi. 22. Am I ready to be swallowed up by the merciless Waves of the tempestuous Ocean? GOD can command a Fish to come and ship me safe to Land, and that in its own Belly, as he did for his Prophet *Jonah*, Jonah ii. 10. Am I in Prison? God can but speak the Word, as he did for St. Peter, and the Chains shall immediately fall off, and the Doors fly open, and I shall be set at Liberty, as he was, Acts xii. 7, 8, 9, 10. And thus I can have no Wants, but God can supply them, no Doubts, but God can resolve them, no Fears, but God can dispel them, no Dangers, but God can prevent them. And 'tis as certain, that he will, as that he can, do these things for me, Himself having by Covenant, engag'd and given himself unto me.

AND as, in God's giving himself, he hath given whatsoever he is, and whatsoever he hath unto me, and will do whatsoever he can do for me; so in my giving myself to him, whatsoever I have I am to give to him, and whatsoever I do I am to do for him. But now, though we should thus wholly give up ourselves to God, and do whatever He requires of us (which none, I fear, without some degree of Presumption, can say he has done) yet there is an infinite Disproportion between the Grant on God's part, and that on ours, in that He is GOD, and we but Creatures, the Workmanship of His own Hands, to whom it was our Duty to give ourselves, whether He had ever given himself to us or no; He is ours by Covenant only, not by Nature, we are his both by Covenant and Nature too.

HENCE we may infer, That it is not only our Duty to do what He hath commanded us, because he hath said, *Do this and live*; but because He hath said, *Do this*; yea, tho' he should say, *Do this and die*; it would still

be our Duty to do it, because we are his, wholly of his making, and therefore wholly at his disposing; Infomuch that should he put me upon the doing that which would inevitably bring Ruin upon me, I am not to neglect obeying him for fear of destroying myself, his Will and Pleasure being infinitely to be preferr'd before my Life and Salvation.

BUT, if it were my Duty to obey His Commands, though I should die for it, how much more, when He hath promised, I shall live by it? Nay, I shall not only live, if I obey; but my Obedience itself shall be my Life and Happiness; for if I be obedient unto him, he is pleas'd to account himself as glorified by me; *for herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much Fruit,* John xv. 8. Now, what greater Glory can possibly be desir'd, than to glorify my Maker? How can I be more glorified by God than to have God glorified by me? It is the Glory of God to glorify himself; and what higher Glory can a Creature aspire after, than that which is the infinite Glory of its All-glorious Creator? It is not, therefore, my *Duty only*, but my *Glory* to give myself; and whatsoever I am, unto him, *to glorify him both in my Body and in my Spirit, which are his,* 1 Cor. vi. 20. to lay out whatsoever I have for him, *to honour him with all my Substance,* Prov. iii. 9, and *whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, to do all to his Glory,* 1 Cor. x. 31. Not as if it was possible for God to receive more Glory from me now, than he had in himself from all Eternity. No; He was infinitely glorious then, and 'tis impossible for him to be *more* glorious now; all that we can do, is duly to acknowledge that *Glory* which he hath in himself, and to manifest it, as we ought, before others; which, tho' it be no Addition to his *Glory*, yet it is the Perfection of ours, which he is pleased to account as his.

As for the Grant, therefore, in the Covenant of Grace, I believe it to be the same on our Parts, with that in the Covenant of Works, i. e. That we *Christians* are as much bound to obey the Commands he lays upon us now, as the *Jews* under the Old Covenant were. What difference there is, is wholly and solely on God's Part; who, instead of expecting Obedience from us, is pleased, in this

new

new Covenant, to give this Obedience to us. Instead of saying, *Do this and live*, He hath, in effect, said, I will enable you to do this, that so you may live. *I will put my Laws into your Minds, and write them in your Hearts;* and *I will be to you a GOD, and you shall be to Me a People*, Heb. viii. 10. Not, I will, if you will; but I will, and you shall. Not, if you will do this, you shall live; but, you shall do this, and live. So that God doth not require less from us, but only hath promised more to us, in the *New*, than he did in the *Old Covenant*. There, we were to perform *Obedience to GOD*, but it was by our own Strength: Here, we are to perform the *same Obedience* still, but 'tis by *His Strength*. Nay as we have more Obligations to Obedience upon us now, than we had before, by reason of God's expressing more Grace and Favour to us than formerly he did; so, I believe GOD expects more from us, under the *New*, than he did under the *Old Covenant*. In *that*, he expected the Obedience of Men; in *this*, he expects the Obedience of *Christians*, such as are by Faith united unto Christ, and, in Christ, unto himself; and so are to do what they do, not by the Strength of Man, as before, but by the Strength of the eternal GOD himself; who, as he at first created me for himself, so he hath now purchased me to himself, received me into Covenant with him, and promised to enable me with Grace to perform that Obedience he requires from me; and, therefore, he now expects I should lay out myself, even whatsoever I have or am, wholly for him and his Glory.

THIS, therefore, being the Tenor of this Covenant of Grace, it follows, that I am now none of my own, but wholly God's: I am his by Creation, and his by Redemption, and, therefore, ought to be his by Conversation. Why, therefore, should I live any longer to myself, who am not mine own, but God's? And why should I grudge to give myself to him, who did not grudge to give himself for me? or rather, Why should I steal myself from him, who have already given myself to him? But did I say, I have given myself to my God? Alas! it is but the restoring myself to him, whose I was ever since I had a Being, and to whom I am still infinitely more en-

gaged, that I can thus cordially engage myself to him; for as I am not my own, but his, so the very giving of myself to him, is not from myself, but from Him. I could not have given myself to him, had He not first given himself to me, and even wrought my Mind into this Resolution of giving myself to Him.

BUT, having thus solemnly by Covenant, given myself to Him, how doth it behove me to improve myself for Him? my Soul is his, my Body his, my Parts his, my Gifts his, my Graces his, and whatsoever is mine, is his: for, without him I could not have been, and therefore could have had nothing. So that I have no more cause to be proud of any thing I have, or am, than a Page hath to be proud of his fine Cloaths, which are not his, but his Master's; who bestows all this Finery upon him, not for his Page's Honour or Credit, but for his own.

AND thus it is with the best of us, in respect of God; He gives Men Parts and Learning, and Riches, and Grace, and desires and expects, that we should make a due Use of them: But to what End? Not to gain Honour and Esteem to ourselves, to make us proud and haughty, but to give Him the Honour due to his Name; and so employ them as Instruments in promoting his Glory and Service. So that, whensoever we do not lay out ourselves to the utmost of our Power for Him, it is downright Sacrilege; 'tis robbing God of that which is more properly his, than any Man in the World can call any thing he hath his own.

HAVING, therefore, thus wholly surrendered and given up myself to GOD, so long as it shall please his Majesty to entrust me with myself, to lend me my Being in the lower World, or to put any thing else into my Hands, as Time, Health, Strength, Parts, or the like; I am resolved, by his Grace, to lay out all for his Glory. All the Faculties of my Soul, as I have given them to him, so will I endeavour to improve them for him; they shall still be at his most noble Service; my Understanding shall be his, to know him; my Will his, to chuse him; my Affections his, to embrace him; and all the Members of my Body shall act in subserviency to Him.

AND

And thus, having given myself to God on Earth, I hope God in a short Time will take me to himself in Heaven; where as I gave myself to him in Time, He will give himself to me unto all Eternity.

ARTICLE X.

I believe, that as GOD entered into a Covenant of Grace with us, so hath He signed this Covenant to us by a double Seal, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

AS the Covenant of Works had two Sacraments, viz. *The Tree of Life*, and *The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*; the first signifying and sealing *Life* and *Happiness* to the *Performance*, the other *Death* and *Misery* to the *Breach* of it: So the Covenant of Grace was likewise sealed with two Typical Sacraments, *Circumcision* and the *Passover*. The former was annexed at GOD's first making his Covenant with *Abraham's Person*; the other was added, at his fulfilling the Promises of it, to his *Seed* or *Posterity*, which were, therefore styl'd, *the Promised Seed*. But these being only Typical of the true and *Spiritual* Sacraments, that were afterwards to take place upon the Coming of the *Messiah*, there was then, in the Fulness of Time, two other Sacraments substituted in their stead, viz. *Baptism*, and the *Supper of the Lord*. And these Sacraments were both correspondent to the Types by which they were represented.

As to the first, viz. *Circumcision*, whether I consider the Time of conferring it, or the End of its Institution, I find it exactly answers to the Sacrament of *Baptism* in both these Respects. For, as the Children under the *Law* were to be *circumcised* in their Infancy, at *eight Days old*; so are the Children under the *Gospel* to be *baptiz'd* in their Infancy too. And as the principal thing intended in the Rite of *Circumcision*, was to initiate or admit the Children of the Faithful into the *Jewish Church*; so the chief Design of *Baptism* now, is to admit the Chidren of such as profess themselves *Christians*, into the *Church of Christ*.

And, for this Reason, I believe, that as, under the *Old Testament* Children had the Grant of Covenant-Privileges, and Church Membership, as really as their Parents had; so this Grant was not repeal'd, as is intimated, *Acts* ii. 39. but farther confirmed in the *New Testament*, in that the Apostle calls the Children of believing Parents *Holy*, *1 Cor.* xii. 14. Which cannot be understood of a *real* and *inherent*, but only of a *relative* and *covenanted* Holiness, by virtue of which, being born of *believing* Parents, themselves are accounted in the Number of *Believers*, and are therefore called *Holy Children* under the *Gospel*, in the same Sense that the People of *Israel* were called a *Holy People* under the *Law*, *Deut.* vii. 6. and xiv. 2, 21. as being all within the *Covenant of Grace*, which, through the Faith of their *Parents*, is thus sealed to them in Baptism.

N O T that I think it necessary, that all Parents should be endued with what we call a *Saving Faith*, to entitle their Children to these Privileges, (for then none but the Children of such who have the Spirit of Christ truly implanted in them, would be qualified to partake of the *Covenant*) but even such, who by an outward historical Faith, have taken the Name of Christ upon them, are, by that means, in Covenant with **GOD**, and so accounted *Holy* in respect of their *Profession*, whatever they may be in point of *Practice*. And if they are themselves *Holy*, it follows, on course, that their Children must be so too, they being esteemed as Parts of their Parents, till made distinct Members in the Body of Christ; or, at least, till they come to the Use of their Reason, and the Improvement of their Natural Abilities.

A N D, therefore, tho' the *Seal* be changed, yet the *Covenant-Privileges*, wherewith the Parties stipulating unto **GOD** were before invested, are no whit altered or diminished; Believers Children being as really Confederates with their Parents, in the *Covenant of Grace* now, as they were before under the *Jewish Administration* of it. And this seems to be altogether necessary; for otherwise, Infants should be invested with Privileges under the *Type*, and be deprived of, or excluded from them, under the more perfect Accomplishment of the same *Covenant* in the thing

thing typified; and so, the Dispensations of G O D's Grace would be more strait and narrow since, than they were before the coming of our Saviour, which I look upon to be no less than Blasphemy to assert.

And, upon this ground, I believe, it is as really the Duty of Christians to baptize their Children now, as ever it was the Duty of the Israelites to circumcise theirs; and therefore, St. Peter's Question, *Can any Man forbid Water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?* Acts x. 47. may very properly be applied to this Case. Can any one forbid Water, that Children should not be baptized, who are in Covenant with the most High G O D as well as we? For what is it, I pray, that the Right to Baptism doth depend upon? Surely, not upon performing the Conditions of the Covenant; for then none should be baptized, but such as are true Believers in themselves, and known to be so by us, and, by consequence, none at all; it being only G O D's Prerogative to search their Hearts, and to know the Truth of that Grace, which Himself hath been pleased to bestow upon them. But Childrens Right to Baptism is grounded upon the outward Profession of their Believing Parents; so that as a King may be crown'd in his Cradle, not because he is able to wield the Scepter, or manage the Affairs of his Kingdom, but because he is Heir to his Father; so here, Children are not therefore baptized, because they are able to perform the Conditions of the Covenant, which is sealed to them, but because they are Children to believing Parents. And this seems yet to be farther evident, from the very Nature of Seals, which are not administered or annexed to any Covenant, because the Conditions are already performed, but rather that they may be performed: and so Children are not baptized, because they are already true Christians, but that they may be so hereafter.

As for a Command for Infant-Baptism, I believe, that the same Law that enjoined Circumcision to the Jewish enjoys Baptism likewise to Christian Children, there being the same Reason for both. The Reason why the Jewish Children were to be circumcised, was because they were Jewish Children, born of such as profess'd the true

Worship of G O D, and were in Covenant with Him ; and there is the same Reason, why *Christian Children* are to be baptized, even because they are *Christian Children*, born of such as profess the true Worship of the same G O D, and are Confederates in the same Covenant with the *Jews* themselves. And, as there is the same Reason, so likewise the same End for both, *viz.* That the Children might be actually admitted into the same Covenant with their Parents, and have it visibly confirm'd to them by this initiating Seal put upon them : So that *Circumcision* and *Baptism* are not two *distinct* Seals, but the *same* Seal diversly applied ; the one being but as a Type of the other, and so to give place to it, whensoever, by the Institution of C H R I S T, it should be brought into the Church of G O D. And therefore, the Command for initiating Children into the Church by *Baptism*, remains still in Force, tho' Circumcision which was the Type and Shadow of it, be done away. And for this Reason, I believe, that was there never a Command in the *New Testament* for Infant-Baptism, yet, seeing there is one for Circumcision in the *Old*, and for Baptism, as coming into the Place of it, in the *New*, I should look upon Baptism as necessarily to be applied to Infants now, as Circumcision was then.

BUT why should it be supposed, that there is no Command in the *New Testament* for Infant-Baptism ? There are several Texts that seem to imply its being practised in the first Preaching of the Gospel, as particularly in the Case of *Lydia* and the *Keeper of the Prison*, Acts xvi. 15, 33. who had their whole Families baptized, and we nowhere find, that Children were excepted. On the contrary, St Peter exhorting the converted *Jews* to be baptized, makes use of this Argument to bring them to it, *For the Promise*, says he, *is unto you, and to your Children*, Acts ii. 38, 39. which may as reasonably be understood of their Infants, as of their adult Posterity. But, besides, it was the express Command of C H R I S T to his Disciples, that they should *go, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, Matth. xxvii. 19. The Meaning of which Words I take to be this; *Go ye, and preach the Gospel amongst all Nations,*

Nations, and endeavour thereby to bring them over to the embracing of it ; that leaving all *Jewish* Ceremonies and *Heathenish* Idolatries, they may profess my Name, and become my Disciples, receive the Truth, and follow me ; which if they do, I charge you to *baptize them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost* : For the Word μαθητεύσατε doth not signify to teach, but to make *Disciples*, denoting the same here, that μαθητὰς ποιεῖν doth upon the like Occasion, *John iv. 1.*

AND this is the Sense that all the ancient Translations agree in ; nor, indeed, will the Text itself bear any other ; especially, not that of *Teaching* ; for though the Apostles should have taught all Nations, yet they were not presently to baptize them, unless they became Disciples, and Professors of the Doctrine that they were taught. A Man may be *taught* the Doctrine of the Gospel, and yet not *believe* it ; and even though he should believe, yet unless he openly professes his Faith in it, he ought not presently to be baptized. For, without this outward Profession, the very Possessing of *CHRIST* cannot entitle a Man to this Privilege before Men, tho' it doth before GOD ; because we cannot know how any one stands affected towards Christ, but only by his outward Profession of Him. 'Tis the *inward* Possession of Christ's *Person* that entitles us to the inward spiritual Grace : But 'tis the *outward* Profession of His Name only, that entitles us to the outward visible Sign in *Baptism* : So that a Man must of Necessity, be a professed Disciple of the *Gospel*, before he can be admitted into the *Church* of Christ. And hence it is, that the Words must necessarily be understood of *Discipling*, or bringing the Nations over to the Profession of the *Christian Religion* ; or else, we must suppose, what ought not to be granted, that our Saviour must command many that were visible Enemies to his Cross, to be received into his Church ; for many of the *Jews* were taught and instructed in the Doctrine of the *Gospel*, who notwithstanding, were inveterate Enemies unto Christ. They were taught, that He was the *Messiah*, and Saviour of the World, and that *whoever believed in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life* ; and they had all the Reason in the World to be convinced of it : Yet, I hope,

these

there is none will say, that the bare Knowledge of, or tacit Assent unto, these Things, are a sufficient Ground for their Reception into the Church.

Now, as it was in the *Jewish Church*, when any one became a Proselyte, not only himself, but whatsoever Children he afterwards had, were to be circumcised; so in the Church of Christ, whensoever any Person is brought over into the Profession of the *Christian Religion*, his Seed are all equally invested with the outward Privileges of it with himself, tho' they be not as yet come to Years of Discretion, nor able, of themselves, to make their Profession of that Religion they are to be receiv'd and baptiz'd into. For, so long as Children are in their Infancy, they are (as I before observed) looked upon as Parts of their Parents, and are therefore accounted holy, by the outward Profession which their Parents, under whom they are comprehended, make of it: And in this Sense, *1 Cor. viii. 14.* the unbelieving Husband is said to be *sanctified by the believing Wife, and the unbelieving Wife by the believing Husband*, that is, Man and Wife being made one Flesh, they are denominated, from the better Part, Holy, and so are their Children too.

AND hence it is, that I verily believe, that in the Commission which our Saviour gave to His Apostles, to *disciple and baptize all Nations*. He meant, that they should preach the Gospel in all Nations, and thereby bring over all Persons of Understanding and Discretion to the Profession of His Name, and in them, their Children; and so engrift both Root and Branch into himself, the true Vine, by baptizing both Parents and Children in the *Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*.

T H E main Objection against this is, That Infants are not in a Capacity either to learn and understand their Duty in this *Covenant*, or to stipulate and promise for their future Performance of the Conditions of it. But this Difficulty is easily removed, when I consider, that 'tis not by virtue of their *own Faith or Knowledge*, but that of their *Parents*, that they are admitted to this Sacrament; nor is it requir'd, that they should stipulate or promise in their *own Persons*, but by their *Godfathers or Sponsors*, who enter into this Engagement for them, and oblige them, when

when they come of Age, to take it upon themselves; which accordingly they do. And this Engagement, by *Proxy*, does as effectually bind them to the Performance of the *Conditions*, as if they were actually in a Capacity to have stipulated for *themselves*, or sealed the *Covenant* in their own *Persons*. For these spiritual Signs or Seals are not design'd to make GOD's Word surer to us, but only to make our Faith stronger in him; nor are they of the Substance of the *Covenant*, but only for the better Confirmation of it.

AND, as *Baptism* thus comes in the Place of the *Jews Circumcision*, so doth our *Lord's Supper* answser to their *Passover*. Their Paschal Lamb represented our Saviour *CHRIST*, and the Sacrificing of it the Shedding of his Blood upon the *Cross*; and as the *Passover* was the Memorial of the *Israelites* Redemption from *Egypt's* Bondage, *Exod. xii. 14.* so is the *Lord's Supper* the Memorial of our Redemption from the Slavery of Sin, and Assertion into *Christian Liberty*; Or rather, it is a solemn and lively Representation of the Death of *CHRIST*, and offering it again to *GOD*, as an Atonement for Sin, and Reconciliation to his Favour.

So that, I believe, this Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, under the *Gospel*, succeeds to the Rite of *Sacrificing* under the *Law*; and is properly called the *Christian Sacrifice*, as representing the *Sacrifice* of *CHRIST* upon the *Cross*. And the End of both is the same: For, as the *Sacrifices* under the *Law* were design'd as a *Propitiation* or *Atonement for Sins*, by transferring the *Punishment* from the *Offerer*, to the thing offered, which is therefore called, *The accursed thing*, as we read, *Lev. xvii. 11.* So, under the *Gospel*, we are told, That it was for this end that our Saviour died, and suffered in our stead, that he might obtain the Pardon of our Sins, and reconcile us to His Father, by laying the Guilt of them upon his own Person. And accordingly, he says of himself, that *he came to give his Life a Ransom for many*, *Matth. xx. 28.* And St. Paul tells us, *2 Cor. v. 21.* that *He was made Sin for us, who knew no Sin.*

AND as the End of both Institutions was the same, so they were both equally extended. The Paschal Lamb was

was offered for all the Congregation of *Israel*, and so is the Sacrement of the Lord's Supper to be administer'd to all the Faithful People in Christ, that do not exclude themselves from it. And for this Reason, I believe, That as all the Congregation of *Israel* was to eat the *Passover*, so is all the Society of *Christians* to receive the *Lord's Supper*; those only to be excepted, who are altogether ignorant of the Nature of that Covenant it seals, or openly and scandalously guilty of the Breach of the Conditions it requires.

BUT why, say some, shoud there be any Exception? Did not Christ die for all Mankind? And is not that Death said to be *a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World?* All this is true, but it does not from hence follow, that all Men must be actually saved and absolved from their Sins, by virtue of His Death. No, 'tis only they, who apply to themselves the Merits of His Passion, by partaking duly of this Holy Sacrement, which is the proper Means by which these Blessings are convey'd to us, *whereby we are sealed to the Day of Redemption.* I say *duly*, because tho' this Sacrement was ordain'd for all, yet all will not make themselves worthy of it; and those that are not so, are so far from reaping any Benefit from it, that, as the Apostle says, *they eat and drink their own Damnation, not discerning the Lord's Body*, 1 Cor. xi. 29. And therefore, I believe, That as in the Institution of the *Passover*, there were some particular Duties and Ceremonies enjoin'd for the better Solemnization of it; so there are some preparatory Duties and Qualifications necessarily requir'd for the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*, which, before I presume to partake of it, I must always use my utmost Endeavours to exercise myself in. And these are,

FIRST, That I should *examine, confess, and bewail my Sins before God*, with a true Sense of, and Sorrow for, them; and taking firm Resolutions for the time to come utterly to relinquish and forsake them, solemnly engage myself in a new and truly *Christian Course of Life.*

SECONDLY, That I should *be in perfect Charity with all Men*, i. e. That I should heartily forgive those who have any ways injur'd or offended me; and make Reconciliation

tution or Satisfaction to such whom I have, in any respect, injured or offended myself.

THIRDLY, That I should with an humble and obedient Heart, exercise the Acts of Faith, and Love, and Devotion, during the Celebration of that holy Mystery; and express the Sense I have of this Mystery, by devout Praises and Thanksgivings for the great Mercies and Favours that God vouchsafes to me therein; and by all the Ways and Measures of Charity that he has prescribed, manifest my Love and Beneficence to my Christian Brethren.

THESE are the proper Graces, this the Wedding Garment that every true Christian, who comes to be a Guest at this Holy Supper, ought to be clothed and invested with.

Do Thou, O Blessed JESUS! adorn me with this Holy Robe, and inspire my Soul with such Heavenly Qualities and Dispositions as these; and then I need not fear, but that as oft as I eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink His Blood, I shall effectually obtain the Pardon and the Remission of my Sins, the sanctifying Influences of His Holy Spirit, and a certain Interest in the Kingdom of Glory.

See farther, Treatise of the Sacrament.

A R T I C L E XI.

I believe, that after a short Separation, my Soul and Body shall be united together again, in order to appear before the Judgment-Seat of CHRIST, and be finally sentenced according to my Deserts.

IKNOW, this Body, which, for the present I am ty'd to, is nothing else but a Piece of Clay, made up into the Frame and Fashion of a Man; and therefore, as it was first taken from the Dust, so shall it return to Dust again: But then I believe, on the other hand, that it shall as really be rais'd from the Earth, as ever it shall be carry'd to it; yea, tho' perhaps it may go through a hundred, or a thousand Changes, before that Day come. There are, I confess, some Points in this Article, which are hardly to

to be solved by human *Reason*; but, I believe, there are none so difficult, but what may be reconciled by a divine *Faith*: Tho' it be too hard for *me* to *know*, yet it is not too hard for *GOD* to *do*. He that should have told me some Years ago, that my Body then was, or should be, a Mixture of Particles fetched from so many Parts of the World, and undergo so many Changes and Alterations, as to become in a manner new, should scarce have extorted the Belief of it from me, tho' now I perceive it to be a real Truth; the Meats, Fruits, and Spices, which we eat, being transported from several different Places and Nations, and, by natural Digestion, transfused into the *Constitution* of the Body. And why should not I believe, that the same Almighty Power, who made these several Beings, or Particles of Matter, by which I am fed and sustained, can as easily, with his Word, recall each Part again from the most secret or remote Place, that it can possibly be transported to? Or, that He who fram'd me out of the Dust, can with as much ease gather all the scatter'd Parts of the Body, and put them together again, as He at first formed it into such a Shape, and infused into it a spiritual Being?

AND this *Article* of my *Faith*, I believe, is not only grounded upon, but may, even by the Force of *Reason*, be deduced from, the Principles of Justice and Equity; Justice requiring, that they who are *Copartners* in Vice and Virtue, should be *Copartners* also in Punishments and Rewards. There is scarce a Sin a Man commits, but his *Body* hath a share in it; for tho' the Sin committed would not be a *Sin* without the *Soul*, yet it could not be committed without the *Body*; the *Sinfulness* of it depends upon the *former*, but the *Commission* of it may lawfully be charged upon the *latter*: The *Body* could not *sin*, if the *Soul* did not *consent*; nor could the *Soul* sin, (especially so oft) if the *Body* did not *tempt* to it. And this is particularly observable in the Sins of Adultery, Drunkenness and Gluttony, which the *Soul* of itself cannot commit, neither would it ever consent unto them, did not the prevalent Humours of the *Body*, as it were, force it to do so. For in these Sins, the *Act* that is *sinful*,

ful, is wholly performed by the *Body*, tho' the *Sinfulness* of that *Aet* doth principally depend upon the *Soul*.

NEITHER is the *Body* only Partner with the *Soul* in these *groffer Sins*; but even the more *spiritual Sins*, which seem to be most abstracted from the Temperature of the *Body*, as if they depended only upon the *Pravity* and *Corruption* of the *Soul*; I say, even these are partly to be ascrib'd to the *Body*. For Instance, an atheistical Thought, which, one would think, was to be laid only upon the *Soul*, because the Thought takes its Rise from thence; yet if we seriously weigh and consider the Matter, we shall find, that it is usually the *sinful Affections* of the *Body* that thus debauch the *Mind* into these blasphemous Thoughts; and that it is the *Pleasures of Sense* that first suggest them to us, and raise them in us. And this appears, in that there was no Person that ever was, or indeed ever can be, an *Archeist* at all Times; but such Thoughts spring up in the *Fountain* of the *Soul*, only when muddled with *fleshy Pleasures*. And thus it is in most other *Sins*; the *carnal Appetite* having gotten the *Reins* into its *Hand*, it misleads the *Reason*, and hurries the *Soul* wheresoever it pleaseth. And what, then, can be more reasonable, than that the *Body* should be punish'd, both for its usurping the *Soul's Prerogative*, and for its tyrannizing so much over that, which, at the first, it was made to be subject to?

BUT farther, it is the *Body* that enjoys the *Pleasure*, and therefore, good Reason, that the *Body* should likewise bear the *Punishment* of *Sin*. Indeed, I cannot conceive, how it can stand with the *Principles of Justice*, but that the *Body*, which both accompanies the *Soul* in *Sin*, enjoys the *Pleasures* of it, and leads the *Soul* into it, should bear a Share in the *Miseries* which are due to, and inflicted upon it. For what doth *Justice* require, but to punish the Person that *offends*, for the *Offence* he commits? Whereas, if the *Soul* only, and not the *Body*, were to suffer, the Person would not suffer at all; the *Body* being Part of the Person, as well as the *Soul*, and therefore, the *Soul* no Person without the *Body*.

HENCE it is, That tho' the *Scripture* had been silent in this Point, yet methinks I could not but have believ'd it:

it: How much more firm and stedfast, then, ought I to be in my Faith, when Truth itself hath been pleased so expressly to affirm it? For thus saith the Lord of Hosts, *Tby dead Men shall live, together with My dead Body shall they arise,* Isaiah xxvi. 19. *And many of them that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt,* Dan. xii. 2. And thus saith the Saviour of the World, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; the Hour is coming, in which all that are in the Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good, unto the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, unto the Resurrection of Damnation, John v. 28, 29. The same hath it pleased His Divine Majesty to assert and prove with His own Mouth, Matth. xxii. 31, 32. and by His Spirit, 2 Cor. xv. and in many other Places: From all which, I may, with Comfort and Confidence, draw the same Conclusion that holy Job did, and say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see GOD; whom I shall see for myself, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, though my Reins be consumed within me,* Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

AND, as I believe my Body shall be thus raised from the Grave, so I believe the other Part of me, my Soul, shall never be carry'd to it; I mean it shall never die, but shall be as much, yea, more alive, when I am dying, than it is now; by so much my Soul shall be the more active in itself, by how much it is less tied and subjected to the Body.

AND, farther I believe, That so soon as ever my Breath is out of my Nostrils, my Soul shall remove her Lodging into the other World, there to live as really to Eternity, as I now live here in Time. Yea, I am more certain, that my Soul shall return to GOD that gave it, than that my Body shall return to the Earth, out of which I had it. For I know, 'tis possible my Body may be made immortal, but I am sure, my Soul shall never be mortal. I know, that, at the first, the Body did equally participate of Immortality with the Soul, and that had not

not Sin made the Divorce, they had liv'd together, like loving Mates, to all Eternity. And I dare not affirm, that Enoch and Elias underwent the common Fate; or suppose they did, yet, sure I am, the Time will come, when Thousands of Men and Women shall not be dissolv'd and die, but be immediately chang'd and caught up into Heaven, or to their eternal Confusion, thrust down into Hell; whose Bodies, therefore, shall undergo no such thing as Rotting in the Grave, or being eaten up of Worms, but, together with their Souls, shall immediately launch into the vast Ocean of Eternity. But who ever yet read or heard of a Soul's Funeral? Who is it? Where is the Man? Or, What is his Name, that wrote the History of her Life and Death? Can any Disease arise in a Spiritual Substance, wherein there is no such thing as Contrariety of Principles or Qualities to occasion any Disorder or Distemper? Can an *Angel* be sick, or die? And, if not an *Angel*, why a *Soul*, which is endowed with the same *spiritual* Nature here, and shall be adorned with the same eternal Glory hereafter? No, no; deceive not thy self, my Soul; for 'tis more certain, that thou shalt always live, than that thy Body shall ever die.

Nor that I think my Soul must always live, in despite of Omnipotence itself, as if it was not in the Power of the Almighty, to take my Being and Existence from me; for I know, I am but as a *Potsherd* in the *Potter's Hand*, and that it is as easy for Him to dash me in Pieces now, as it was to raise it up at the first. I believe, it is as easy for him to command my Soul out of its Being, as out of its Body; and to send me back into my Mother *Nothing*, out of whose Womb he took me, as it was at first to fetch me thence. I know, he could do it, if He would, but himself hath said, he will not, and, therefore, I am sure, he cannot do it; and that, not because he hath not *Power*, but because he hath not *Will* to do it; it being impossible for him to do that which he doth not *will* to do. And that it is not his Will or Pleasure ever to annihilate my Soul, I have it under his own Hand, that my *Dust shall return to the Earth as it was, and my Spirit to GOD that gave it*, Eccles. xii. 7. And if it return to God, it is so far from returning to *No-*
thing,

thing, that it returns to the Being of all Beings; and so, Death to me will be nothing more, than going home to my Father and Mother; my Soul goes to my Father, GOD, and my Body to my Mother, Earth.

THUS, likewise hath it pleased His Sacred Majesty to assure me, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolv'd, we have a Building of GOD, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens, 2 Cor. v. 1. so clearly hath the great GOD brought Life and Immortality to Light, through the Gospel, 2 Tim. i. 10. The Light of Nature shews, the Soul can never perish or be dissolved, without the immediate Interposition of GOD's Omnipotence, and we have His own Divinae Word for it, that He will never use that Power, in the Dissolution of it. And, therefore, I may, with the greatest Assurance, affirm and believe, that as really as I now live, so really shall I never die; but that my Soul, at the very Moment of its Departure from the Flesh, shall immediately mount up to the Tribunal of the Most High GOD, there to be judg'd, first privately, by itself, (or perhaps with some other Souls, that shall be summoned to appear before GOD the same Moment:) And then, from these private Sessions, I believe, that every Soul that ever was, or shall be separated from the Body, must either be receiv'd into the Mansions of Heaven, or else sent down to the Dungeon of Hell, there to remain till the Grand Assizes, the Judgment of the Great Day, when the Trumpet shall sound, and the Dead shall be rais'd incorruptible, and we shall be chang'd, 1 Cor. xv. 52. And when our Bodies, by the Word of the Almighty GOD, shall be thus called together again, I believe, that our Souls shall be all prepar'd to meet them, and be united again to them, and so both appear before the Judgment-Seat of CHRIST, to receive Sentence according to what they have done in the Flesh, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil. And, tho' it is very difficult, or rather impossible, for me to conceive or determine the particular Circumstances of this Grand Assize, or the Manner and Method how it shall be manag'd, yet from the Light and Intimations that GOD has vouchsafed to give us of it, I have Grounds to believe, it will be order'd and carried on after this, or the like Manner.

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THE Day and Place being appointed by the King of Kings, the glorious Majesty of Heaven, and Saviour of the World, JESUS CHRIST, who long ago received His Commission from the Father, to be the *Judge of Quick and Dead*, John v. 22. Acts xvii. 31. shall descend from Heaven, with the Shout of the Archangel, and with the Trump of GOD, 1 Thess. iv. 16. royally attended with an innumerable Company of glorious Angels, Matth. xxv. 51. These He shall send with the great Sound of a Trumpet, and they shall gather together his Elect from the four Winds; from the one End of Heaven to the other, chap. xxiv. 31. yea, and the Wicked too, from whatsoever Place they shall be in; and then shall He sever the Wicked from the Just, Matth. xiii. 49. So that all Nations, and every particular Person, that ever did, or ever shall live upon the Face of the Earth, shall be gathered together before Him, and He shall separate the one from the other, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats, and He shall set the Sheep on His Right Hand, but the Goats upon the Left, Matth. xxv. 32, 33.

THINGS being thus set in Order, the Judge shall read His Commission, i. e. declare and manifest Himself to be the Judge of all the Earth, sent by the GOD of Heaven to judge Them that had condemned Him, and, in that very Body, that once was crucified upon the Cross at Jerusalem, for our Sins. So that all the World shall then behold him shining in all His Glory and Majesty, and shall acknowledge Him to be now, what they would not believe Him to be before, even both GOD and Man, and so the Judge of all the World, from whom there can be no Appeal.

AND having thus declared his Commission, I believe the first Work He will go upon, will be to open the *Book of GOD's Remembrance*, and to cause all the Indictments to be read, that are there found on Record against those on his Right Hand; but behold, all the black Lines of their Sins being blotted out with the red Lines of their Saviour's Blood, and nothing but their good Works, their Prayers, their Sermons, their Meditations, their Aims, and the like, to be found there; the Righteous Judge, before whom they stand, turning Himself towards them,

with

with a serene and smiling Countenance, will declare to them before all the World, that their Sins are pardoned, and their Persons accepted by him, as having believed in him; and therefore will He immediately proceed to pronounce the happy Sentence of Election upon them, saying, *Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

T H E Sentence being thus pronounced, the Righteous (and I hope myself among the rest) shall go up with Shouts of Joy and Triumph, to sit with our Blessed Redeemer, to judge the other Parts of the World, who sit at the Left Hand of the Tribunal, with ghastly Countenances and trembling Hearts, to receive their last and dreadful Doom. Against these all the Sins that ever they committed, or were guilty of, shall be brought up in Judgment against them, as they are found on Record in the Book of G O D's Remembrance, and the Indictment read against every particular Person, high or low, for every particular Sin, great or small, which they have committed.

A N D the Truth of this Indictment shall be attested by their own Consciences, crying, *Guilty, Guilty*: I say, by their own *Consciences*, which are as a thousand *Witnesses*: yea, and by the *Omniscience* of G O D too, which is as a thousand *Consciences*. And therefore, without any further Delay, shall the Judge proceed to pronounce the Sentence, the doleful Sentence of Condemnation upon them, *Depart, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

T H I S, I believe, or such-like, will be the Method of Christ's proceeding with us in that great and terrible Day of Tryal and Retribution.

O H ! may these awful *Thoughts and Ideas* of it always accompany me, and strike such a deep and lively Impression upon my Heart, in every Action of Life, as to deter me from offending this Just and Almighty Being, in whose Power it is, to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell; and engage me in such a regular, strict, and conscientious Course of Life, as to be always ready, whenever He shall please to summon me, to give in my Accounts at the great Audit, and with an holy Assurance, fly for Mercy and Succour into the

the Hands of my Redeemer, and be permitted to enter into the Joys of his Rest !

ARTICLE XII.

I believe, there are two other Worlds, besides this I live in; a World of Misery for unrepenting Sinners, and a World of Glory for believing Saints.

WHEN Death hath opened the Cage of Flesh, wherein the Soul is penned up, whither it flies, or how it subsists, I think it not easy to determine, or indeed to conceive. As for the Platonick Aerial and Aerethereal Vehicles, succeeding this Terrestrial one, I find neither Mention of, nor Warrant for them, in the Word of GOD. And, indeed, to suppose that a Spiritual Substance cannot subsist of itself, without being supported by a Corporeal Vehicle, is, in my Opinion, too gross a Conceit for any Philosopher, much more for one that professes himself a Divine, to advance or entertain. Only this I am sure of, that according to the Distinction of Lives here into good or bad, and the Sentences passed upon all hereafter, of Absolution or Condemnation, there will be a twofold Receptacle for the Souls of Men, the one of Happiness, the other of Misery.

As to the first, I believe, that at the great and general Assizes of the World, there will be a glorious Entrance opened for the Righteous into the Holy of Holies, the Seat and Fountain of all Bliss and Happiness, where they shall draw nigh to the most High GOD, behold His Presence in Righteousness, and reign with him for ever in Glory, where they shall see him Face to Face, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. and know Him the only true GOD, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, John xvii. 3. And this Knowing and Beholding GOD Face to Face, is, I believe the very Heaven of Heavens, even the highest Happiness that it is possible a Creature should be made capable of: For in having a perfect Knowledge of GOD, we shall have a perfect Knowledge of all things that ever were, are, shall, yea,

yea, or can, be in the World. For GOD being the Being of all Beings, in seeing Him, we shall not only see whatsoever hath been, but whatsoever can be communicated from Him. The Contemplation of which, cannot but ravish and transport my Spirit beyond itself; especially, when I consider, that in knowing this One-All-Things, GOD, I cannot but enjoy whatsoever 'tis possible any Creature should enjoy. For the knowing of a Thing is the Soul's Enjoyment of it; the Understanding being to the Soul, what the Senses are to the Body. And, therefore, as the Body enjoys nothing but by its Senses, so neither doth the Soul enjoy any thing but by its Understanding: And, as the Body is said to have whatsoever affects its proper Senses, so may the Soul be said to have whatsoever comes under its Knowledge. Nay, the Soul so far *bath* what it knows, that, in a manner, it *is* what it knows; itself being, in a *spiritual* manner, enlarged, according to the Extent of the Objects which it knows, as the Body is by the Meat it eats; the Truths we know turning into the Substance of our Souls, as the Meat we eat doth into the Substance of our Bodies.

But Oh! what a rare Soul shall I then have, when it shall be extended to every thing that ever was, or ever could have been! What a happy Creature shall I then be, when I shall know, and so enjoy Him that is all Things in Himself! What can a Creature desire more? yea, What more can a Creature be made capable of enjoying or desiring! And that which will always accompany this our Knowledge and Enjoyment, is, perfect Love to what we enjoy and know, without which we should take Pleasure in *nothing*, tho' we should have all *things* to take Pleasure in. But who will be able not to love the chiefest Good, that knows and enjoys Him, and therefore enjoys Him because he knows Him? Questionless, in Heaven, as I shall enjoy whatsoever I can love, so shall I love whatsoever I enjoy. And this, therefore, I believe to be the Perfection of my Happiness, and the Happiness of my Perfection, in the other World; that I shall perfectly *know* and *love*, and so, perfectly *enjoy* and *rejoyce* in the most High GOD; and shall be, as known, so perfectly *loved*, and *rejoyced* in by Him. And questionless, for all our shallow

shallow Apprehensions and low Estimations of these Things now, they cannot chuse but be vast and un-conceivable Pleasures, too great for any Creature to enjoy, whilst here below.

If we have but the least Drop of these Pleasures distilled into us here upon Earth, how strangely do they make us, as it were, besides ourselves, by lifting us above our selves! If we can but at any time get a Glympse of GOD, and of His Love to us, how are we immediately carried beyond all other Pleasures and Contentments whatsoever! How apt are we to say, with Peter, *It is good for us to be here!* And if the Fore-tastes of the Blessings of Ca-naan, if the dark Intimations of GOD's Love to us, be so unspeakably pleasant, so ravishing delightsome, Oh! What will the full Possession of Him be! What trans-porting Extasies of Love and Joy shall those blessed Souls be possessed with, who shall behold the King of Glory smiling upon them, rejoicing over them, and shining forth in all his Love and Glory upon them! Oh! what astonish-ing Beauty will they then behold! What flowing, what refresh-ing Pleasures shall then solace and delight their Spi-rits, unto all Eternity! Pleasures! far greater than I am able either to express or conceive, much less to enjoy, on thi^f fide Heaven! My Faculties are now too narrow and scanty for such an Entertainment and therefore, till they are spiritualized and enlarged, they can't receive it! This is the Portion only of another World, this the *Crown of Righteousness*, which the *Lord the Righteous Judge* reserves in Heaven for me, and which, at His second Coming, He has promised to bestow upon me, and not upon me only, but upon all them also that love His Appearing.

As to the other State, viz. That of the *Wicked* in another Life, I believe it will be as exquisitely miserable and wretched, as that of the *Righteous* is happy and glorious! They will be driven for ever from the *Presence of the L O R D*, from those bright and blessed Regions above, where C H R I S T sits at the *Right Hand of G O D*, to those dark and dismal Dungeons below, where the Devil and his Angels are for ever doomed to be tormented.

WHAT sort of Torments or Punishments they are there to undergo, I am as unable to express, as I am unwilling

ever to experience; but, according to the Notions which Scripture and Reason give me of these Matters, I believe, they will be twofold, *viz.* 1. *Privative.* And 2. *Positive*, *i. e.* The *Wicked* will not only be deprived of all that is *good* and *happy*, but actually condemned to all that is *evil* and *miserable*; and that in the most transcendent Degree.

THE first Part of their Punishment will consist in *Envy*, *Melancholy*, and *Self-condemning Reflections* upon their having defeated, and deprived themselves, not only of their carnal Mirth and sensual Enjoyments, their Friends, Fortunes, and Estates in this World, but also of all the infinite Joys and Glories of the next, the Presence of GOD, the Society of Saints and Angels, and all the refreshing and ravishing Delights which flow from the Fruition of the chiefest Good: And what adds yet farther to their Anguish and Remorse, is, that they have lost the Hopes of ever regaining any of these Enjoyments!

O H! how infinitely tormenting and vexatious must such a Condition be, which at once gives them a View both of the greatest *Happiness* and the greatest *Misery*, without the least Hopes either of recovering the one, or being delivered from the other! How must they tear, torment, and curse themselves, for their former Follies; and too late, wish that they had been stifled in the Womb, or drown'd in the Font which was to be their second Birth!

AND, if the bare Privation of Heaven and Happiness be so miserable and tormenting, how will it rack their Consciences, and fill their Souls with Horror and Amazement, to behold the Eternal GOD, the Glorious *Jehovah*, in the Fierceness of His Wrath, continually threatening to pour out his Vengeance upon them! How much more, when He positively consigns them over to the Power of the Devil, to execute His Judgment in full Measure! When they are gnaw'd upon by the Worm of their own Consciences, feel the Wrath of the Almighty flaming in their Hearts, and Fire and Brimstone their continual Torture! And all this, without the least Alloy or Mixture of Refreshment, or the least Hopes of Ending or Cessation.

IN a Word, when they have nothing else to expect but Misery for their Portion, Weeping and Wailing for their constant Employment, and the Devil and damned Fiends their only Companions to all Eternity? And this is that World of Misery, which all that will not be persuaded to believe in CHRIST here, must be doomed for ever to live in hereafter!

I KNOW, the Subjects of this Article were never the Objects of my Sight, tho' they are of my Faith. I never yet saw Heaven or Hell, the Places I am now speaking of; but why should my Faith be staggered or diminished because of that? I never saw Rome or Constantinople; I never saw the flaming Sicilian Hill Aetna; yet I can believe there is such a burning Mountain, and such glorious Cities; because others, who have been there, have told me so; and faithful Writers have related and described them to me. And shall I believe my Fellow-Worms, and not my great Creator, who is Truth itself? What tho' I never did see the New Jerusalem that is above, nor the flaming Tophet that is below; yet, since GOD Himself hath both related and described them to me, why should I doubt of them? Why should not I, a thousand times sooner, believe them to be, than if I had seen them with mine own Eyes? I cannot so much believe, that I now have a Pen in my Hand, have a Book before me, and am writing in it, as I do and ought to believe, that I shall, one Day, and that e'er long, be either in Heaven or in Hell; in the Height of Happiness, or in the Depth of Misery.

I KNOW, my Senses are fallible, and, therefore, may deceive me, but my GOD, I am sure, cannot. And therefore, let others raise Doubts and Scruples as they please, I am as fully satisfied and convinced of the Truth of this Article, as any of the rest.

Do thou, O my GOD, keep me steadfast in this Faith, and give me Grace so to fit and prepare myself to appear before thee, in the White Robes of Purity and Holiness in another World, that whenever my Dissolution comes, I may cheerfully resign my Spirit into the Hands of my Creator, and Redeemer; and, from this crazy House of Clay, take my Flight into the Mansions of Glory, where CHRIST sits

at the Right Hand of GOD; and, with the joyful Quire of Saints, and Angels, and the Blessed Spirits of just Men made perfect, chant forth Thy Praises to all Eternity.

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RESOLUTIONS formed from the foregoing ARTICLES.

AS Obedience without Faith is impossible, so Faith without Obedience is vain and unprofitable: For as the Body, says St. James, without the Spirit is dead, so Faith without good Works is dead also, James ii. 26. Having therefore, I hope, laid a sure Foundation, by resolving what, and how, to believe, I shall now by the Grace of GOD, resolve so to order my Conversation, in all Circumstances and Conditions of Life, as to raise a good Superstructure upon it, and to finish the Work GOD has given me to do, i. e. so to love and please GOD in this World, as to enjoy and be happy with Him for ever, in the next. And 'tis absolutely necessary, that I should be speedy and serious in these Resolutions; especially, when I reflect with myself, how much of my Time I have already spent upon the Vanities and Follies of Youth, and how much enhanced and increased this Work, by acquired Guilt, by settled and repeated Habits of Sin which are not without great Difficulty to be atoned for, and removed. My Heart, alas! is now more hardened in Iniquity, more puffed with Pride, and more averse from GOD, than when I first entered into Covenant with Him; and I have added many actual Sins and Provocations to my Original Guilt and Pollution; instead of glorifying GOD, I have dishonoured Him; and, instead of working out my own Salvation, I have taken a Pleasure and Delight in such things, as would, in the End, be my Ruin and Destruction. So that, before I can be able to make any Progress in the Duties of Religion, or walk in the Paths that lead to Life, I must first be freed and disentangled from these Weights and Incumbrances that clog and retard me in my spiritual Course; I must have my Heart cleansed and softened, humbled and converted to GOD, and all my Transgressions

ens purg'd and pardon'd by the Merits of my Redeemer. And then being fully persuaded, that there is no Way for me to come to the Joys of Heaven, but by walking according to the strictest Rules of Holiness upon Earth, I must endeavour for the future, by a thorough Change and Reformation of my Life, to act in Conformity to the Divine Will and Pleasure in all things and *perfect Holiness in the Fear of the LORD*: For the Most High has told me in His Word, that *without Holiness no Man shall see the LORD*.

IN order, therefore, to qualify myself for this Happiness, it will be necessary for me to settle firm and steady *Resolutions*, to fulfil my Duty, in all the several Branches of it, to GOD, my Neighbour, and myself; and to take care, these *Resolutions* be put in Practice, according to the following Method.

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to walk by Rule, and, therefore, think it necessary to resolve upon Rules to walk by.

AND this rather, because I perceive, the Want of such Rules has been the Occasion of all, or most of my Miscarriages. For, what other Reason can I assign to myself, for having trifled and fain'd away so much Time, as I have done in my younger Years, but because I did not thoroughly resolve to spend it better? What is the Reason, I have hitherto lived so unserviceably to God, so unprofitably to others, and so sinfully against my own Soul; but because I did not apply myself, with that Sincerity of Resolution, Diligence, and Circumspection, as a wise Man ought to have done, to discharge my Duty in these Particulars? I have, indeed, often resolved to bid adieu to my Sins and Follies, and enter upon a new Course of Life; but these *Resolutions* being not rightly formed upon steady Principles, the first Temptation made way for a Relapse, and the same Bait that first allured me, has no sooner been thrown in my way, but I have been as ready

to catch at it again, and as greedy to swallow it, as ever. At other times, again, I have acted without any Thought or Resolution at all; and then, tho' some of my Actions might be good in themselves, yet being done by chance, without any true Design or Intention, they could not be imputed to me as good, but rather the quite contrary: So that, in this respect, the Want of Resolution has not only been the Occasion of my *sinful Actions*, but the Corruption of my good ones too. And shall I still go on in this same loose and careless manner, as I have formerly done? No, I now resolve with myself, in the Presence of the most High and Eternal GOD, not only, in general, to walk by Rule, but to fix the Rule I design to walk by; so that, in all my Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, in all Places, Companies, Relations, and Conditions, I may still have a sure Guide at hand to direct me, such a one as I can safely depend upon without any Danger of being deceived or misled, *i. e.* the Holy Scripture. And therefore,

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to make the Divine Word the Rule of all the Rules I propose to myself.

AS the Will of GOD is the Rule and Measure of all that is good, so there is nothing deserves that Name, but what is agreeable and conformable thereto: And this Will being fully reveal'd and contain'd in the Holy Scripture, it will be necessary for me in directing my Course over the Ocean of this World, that I should fix my Eye continually upon this Star, steer by this Compas, and make it the only Land-Mark; by which I am to be guided to my wish'd-for Haven. I must not, therefore, have Recourse to the inward Workings of my own roving Fancy, or the corrupt Dictates of my own carnal Reason; These are but blind Guides, and will certainly lead me into the Ditch of Error, Heresy and Irreligion, which, in these our self-admiring Days, so many poor Souls have been

RESOLUTIONS.

85

been plunged in. Alas ! how many hath the impetuous Torrent of blind Zeal and erroneous Conscience, born down into a Will-Worship, and voluntary Subjection of themselves to the spurious Offspring of their own deluded Fancies ! If the Light that is within them doth but dictate any thing to be done ; or rather, if the Whimsy doth but take them, that they must do thus or thus, they presently set about it, without ever consulting the Sacred Writings, to see whether it is acceptable to GOD or displeasing to Him. Whereas, for my own part, I know not how any thing should be worthy of GOD's Accepting, that is not of GOD's Commanding. I am sure, the Word of GOD is the good old Way that will certainly bring me to my Father's House ; for how should that Way but lead me to Heaven, which Truth itself has chalk'd out for me ? Not as if it was necessary, that every one of my *Resolutions* should be contain'd, Word for Word, in the Holy Scriptures ; 'tis sufficient, that they be implied in, and agreeable thereto. So that, tho' the Manner of my Expressions may not be found in the Word of GOD, yet the Matter of my *Resolutions* may clearly be drawn from thence. But let me dive a little into the Depth of my sinful Heart ! What's the Reason of my thus resolving upon such an exact Conformity to the Will and Word of GOD ? Is it to work my Way to Heaven with mine own Hands ? to purchase an Inheritance in the Land of Canaan, with the Price of my own Holiness and Religion ? or to swim over the Ocean of this World, into the Haven of Happiness, upon the empty Bladders of my own *Resolutions* ? No.

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolv'd, That as I am not able to think or do any thing that is Good, without the Influence of the Divine Grace; so I will not pretend to merit any Favour from GOD, upon Account of any thing I do for His Glory and Service.

AND indeed, I may very well put this *Resolution* amongst the rest ; for should I resolve to perform my *Resolu-*

tions by mine own Strength, I might as well resolve never to perform them at all: For Truth itself, and mine own woful Experience hath convinc'd me, That I am not able, of myself, so much as to think a good Thought: And how, then, shall I be able of myself, to resolve upon Rules of Holiness, according to the Word of God, or to order my Conversation according to these *Resolutions*, without the Concurrence of the Divine Grace? Alas! should the Great GOD be pleased to leave me to myself to resolve upon what is agreeable to my corrupt Nature, what strange kind of *Resolutions* should I make? What should I resolve upon? Certainly, only nothing but to gratify my carnal Appetite with sensual and sinful Pleasures, to indulge myself in Riot and Excess, to spend my Time, and ravel out my Parts and Talents, in the Revels of Sin and Vanity. But now, to *live holily, righteously and godlily in this present World*, to deny my own, that I may fulfil the Will of GOD; alas! such *Resolutions* as these would never so much as come into my Thoughts, much less would they discover themselves in my outward Conversation.

BUT, suppose I should be able to make good *Resolutions*, and fulfil them exactly in my Life and Actions; yet, What should I do more than my Duty? And what should I be esteem'd of, for doing that? Alas! this is so far from puffing me up, that I am verily persuaded should I spend all my Time, my Parts, my Strength, my Gifts, for GOD, and all my Estate upon the Poor; should I *water my Couch continually with my Tears*, and fast my Body into a Skeleton; should I employ each Moment of my Life in the immediate Worship of my Glorious Creator; so that all my Actions, from my Birth to my Death, should be but one continued Act of Holiness and Obedience; In a word, should I live like an Angel in Heaven, and die like a Saint on Earth, yet I know no truer, nor should I desire any better Epitaph to be engraven upon my Tomb than this, *Here lies an unprofitable Servant*. No, no; 'tis CHRIST, and CHRIST alone, that my Soul must support itself upon. It is Holiness, indeed, that is the Way to Heaven; but there is none, none but CHRIST can lead me to it. As the worst of my Sins are par-

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RESOLUTIONS.

87

donable by CHRIST, so are the best of my Duties damnable without Him.

But if so, then whither tend my *Resolutions*? Why so strict, so circumspect a Conversation! Why, 'tis to justify that Faith before others, and mine own Conscience, which, I hope, through CHRIST, shall justify my Soul before GOD. And I believe farther, That the holier I live here, the happier I shall live hereafter; For though I shall not be saved *for* my Works, yet I believe, I shall be saved *according to* them. And thus, as I dare not expect to be saved by the Performance of my *Resolutions*, without CHRIST's Merit, so neither do I ever expect to be enabled to perform my *Resolutions*, without His Spirit assisting me therein.

No: 'tis Thyself, my GOD, and my Guide, that I wholly
and solely depend upon! Oh! for Thine own Name's Sake,
for Thy Son's Sake, and for thy Promise Sake, do Thou both
make me to know what Thou wouldest have me to do, and
then help me to do what Thou wouldest have me to know!
Teach me first what to resolve upon, and then enable me to
perform my Resolutions; that I may walk with Thee in
the Ways of Holiness here, and rest with Thee in the Joys
of Happiness hereafter!

Concerning my Consideration in general.

HAVING thus far determin'd in general, to form *Resolutions* for the better regulating of my Life, I must now descend to Particulars, and settle some Rules with myself, to resolve my future Life and Conversation wholly into Holiness and Religion. I know, this is a hard Task to do; but I am sure, 'tis no more than what my GOD and my Father has set me: Why, therefore, should I think much to do it? Shall I grudge to spend my Life for Him, who did not grudge to spend His own Blood for me? Shall not I so live, that He may be glorified here on Earth, who died, that I might be glorified in Heaven; Especially, considering, that if my whole Life could be sublimated into Holiness, and moulded into

an exact Conformity unto the Will of the most High, I should be happy beyond Expression? Oh! what a Heaven should I then have on Earth! What Ravishments of Love and Joy would my Soul be continually possessed with! Well; I am resolv'd, by the Grace of God, to try; And to that End, do, this Morning, wholly sequester and set myself apart for GOD, resolving, by the Assistance of His Grace, to make all and every Thought, Word, and Action, to pay their Tribute unto him. Let This Man mind his Profit, a Second his Pleasures, a Third his Honours, a Fourth himself, and All their Sins; I am resolved to mind and serve my GOD, so as to make Him the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last of my whole Life. And, that I may always have an exact Copy before me, to write and frame every Letter of this my Life by,

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to make CHRIST the Pattern of my Life here, that so CHRIST may be the Portion of my Soul hereafter.

LET the whole World go whither it will, I am resolved to walk in the Steps that my Saviour went in before me: I shall endeavour in all Places I come into, in all Companies I converse with, in all the Duties I undertake, in all the Miseries I undergo, still to behave myself as my Saviour would do, was he in my Place. So that wheresoever I am, or whatsoever I am about, I shall still put this Question to myself, Would my Saviour go hither? Would he do this or that? And, every Morning, consider with myself, Suppose my Saviour was in my stead, had my Business to do, how would he demean himself this Day? How meek and lowly would he be in his Carriage and Deportment? How circumspect in his walking? How savoury in his Discourse? How heavenly in all, even his earthly Employments? Well; and I am resolved by Strength from himself, to follow him as near as possible. I know, I can never hope

hope perfectly to transcribe his Copy, but I must endeavour to imitate it in the best Manner I can, that so by doing as He did in Time, I may be where He is to all Eternity. But alas! His Life was spiritual, and *I am carnal, sold under Sin*; and every petty Object that doth but please my Senses, will be apt to divert and draw away my Soul from following His Steps. In order, therefore, to prevent this,

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to walk by Faith, and not by Sight, on Earth, that so I may live by Sight, and not by Faith, in Heaven.

AND truly, this *Resolution* is so necessary to the Performance of all the rest, that without it I can do nothing, with it I can do every thing that is required. The Reason why I am so much taken with the Garnish and seeming Beauty of this World's Vanities, so as to step out of the Road of Holiness to catch at, or delight myself in them, is only because I look upon them with an Eye of *Sense*. For could I behold every thing with the Eye of *Faith*, I should judge of them, not as they seem to me, but as they are in themselves, *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*. For, *Faith* has a quick and piercing Eye, that can look through the outward *Superficies*, into the inward *Essence* of Things. It can look through the pleasing Bait to the hidden Hook, view the Sting, as well as the Honey, the everlasting Punishment, as well as the temporal Contentment there is in Sin. It is, as the Apostle very well defines it, *the Substance of Things hoped for, and the Evidence of Things not seen*, Heb. xi. 1. 'Tis the Substance of whatsoever is promised by GOD to me, or expected by me from him: So that, by *Faith*, whatsoever I hope for in Heaven, I may have the Substance of upon Earth: And 'tis the *Evidence of Things not seen*, the Presence of what is absent, the clear Demonstration of what would otherwise seem impossible; so that I can clearly discern, as through a Prospective, hidden Things, and Things afar off.

off, as if they were open, and just at hand; I can look into the deepest Mysteries, as fully reveal'd, and see Heaven and Eternity as just ready to receive me.

AND, oh! could I but always look through this Glass, and be constantly upon the Mount, taking a View of the Land of *Canaan*, what Dreams and Shadows would all things here below appear to be? Well, by the Grace of GOD, I am resolved no longer to tye myself to Sense and Sight, the sordid and trifling Affairs of this Life, but always to walk as one of the other World, to behave myself in all Places, and at all Times, as one already possess'd of my Inheritance, and an Inhabitant of the *New Jerusalem*: By Faith assuring myself, I have but a few more Days to live below, a little more Work to do; And then I shall lay aside my Glass, and be admitted to a nearer Vision and Fruition of GOD, and see Him Face to Face.

BY this means, I shall always live, as if I was daily to die; always speak, as if my Tongue, the next Moment, were to cleave to the Roof of my Mouth; and continually order my Thoughts and Affections in such a Manner, as if my Soul were just ready to depart, and take its Flight into the other World. By this means, whatsoever Place I am in, or whatsoever Work I am about, I shall still be with my GOD, and demean myself so, as if with St. Jerome, I heard the Voice of the Trumpet crying out, *Awake ye Dead, and come to Judgment.*

AND thus, though I am at present here in the Flesh, yet I shall look upon myself as more really an Inhabitant of Heaven, than I am upon Earth. Here I am but as a Pilgrim or Sojourner, that has no abiding City; but there I have a sure and everlasting Inheritance, which CHRIST has purchas'd and prepar'd for me, and which Faith has given me the Possession of. And, therefore, as it is my Duty, so will I constantly make it my Endeavour, to live up to the Character of a true Christian, whose Portion and Conversation is in Heaven, and think it a Disgrace and Disparagement to my Profession, to stoop to, or entangle myself with, such Toys and Trifles, as the Men of the World busy themselves about; or to feed upon *Husks with Swine* here below, when it is in my Power, by Faith, to be continually supplied with spiritual Manna from

RESOLUTIONS.

91

from Heaven, till at last I am admitted to it. And that I may awe my Spirit into the Performance of these, and all other my *Resolutions*.

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to be looking upon GOD, as always looking upon me.

WHERESOEVER I am, or whatsoever I am a doing, I must still consider the Eye of the Great GOD, as directly intent upon me, viewing and observing all my Thoughts, Words, and Actions, and writing them down in the Book of his Remembrance; and that all these, unless they be washed out with the Tears of Repentance, and cross'd with the Blood of my crucified Saviour, must still remain on Record, and be brought in Judgment against me at the Great Day. That therefore, I may always behave myself as in His Presence, it behoves me thoroughly to consider, and be persuaded, not only that my outward Man, but even all the secret Thoughts, the inward Motions and Retirements of my Soul, all the several Windings and Turnings of my Heart, are exactly known and manifest, as anatomiz'd before Him. He knows what I am now a thinking, doing, and writing, as well as I do myself; yea, He fees every Word whilst 'tis in my Heart, before it be brought forth and set down. He knows all the Resolutions I have made, and how often, poor Creature! I have broken them already, since I made them.

UPON this Consideration, I resolve to stand my Ground against all Temptations, and whenever I find myself in danger to be drawn aside by them, to oppose the Bent of my corrupt Affections, by these or the like Questions: Am I really in the Presence of the Almighty, the great Lord of Heaven and Earth, and shall I presume to affront Him to His Face, by doing such Things as I know are odious and displeasing to him! I would not commit Adultery in the Presence of my Fellow-Creatures, and shall I do it in the Presence of the glorious Jehovah? I would not steal in the Sight of an earthly Judge, and shall I do

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it before the Judge of all the World? If Fear and Shame from Men have such an Influence upon me, as to deter me from the Commission of Sin, how ought I to be moved with the Apprehension of GOD's Inspection, who does not only know my Transgressions, but will eternally punish me for them?

MAY these Thoughts and Considerations always take Place in my Heart, and be accompanied with such happy Effects in my Conversation, that I may live with GOD upon Earth, and so love and fear His Presence in this World, that I may for ever enjoy his Glory in the next!



Concerning my THOUGHTS.

BUT who am I, poor, proud, sinful Dust and Ashes, that I should expect to live so holy, so heavenly, as is here supposed! *Can Grapes be gathered from Thorns, or Figs from Thistles?* Can the Fruit be sweet, when the Root is bitter? Or the Streams healthful, when the Fountain is poison'd? No, I must either get me a *new* and *better* Heart, or else it will be impossible for me ever to lead a *new* and *better* Life. But how must I come by this Pearl of inestimable Value, a new Heart? Can I purchase it with my own Riches? or find it in my own Field? Can I raise it from Sin to Holiness? from Earth to Heaven? or from myself to GOD? Alas! I have endeavour'd it, but I find, by woful Experience, I cannot attain to it: I have been lifting and heaving again and again, to raise it out of the Mire and Clay of Sin and Corruption; but alas! it will not stir: I have rubbed and chafed it with one Threatning after another, and all to get Heat and Life into it; but still 'tis as cold and dead as ever: I have brought it to the Promises, and set it under the Droppings of the Sanctuary; I have shewn it the Beauty of Christ, and the Deformity of Sin; but yet 'tis a hard and sinful, an earthly and sensual Heart still. What, therefore, shall I do with it? O my GOD, I bring it unto Thee! Thou that madest it a Heart at first, canst only make

RESOLUTIONS. 93

make it a new Heart now! O do Thou purify and refine it, and renew a right Spirit within me! Do Thou take it into thy Hands, and out of thine Infinite Goodness, new mould it up, by thine own Grace, into an exact Conformity to Thine own Will? Do Thou but give me a new Heart, and I shall promise Thee, by Thy Grace, to lead a new Life, and become a new Creature! Do Thou but clear the Fountain, and I shall endeavour to look to the Streams that flow from it! which that I may be able to do, with the better Success,

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolv'd by the Grace of GOD, to watch as much over the inward Motions of my Heart, as the outward Actions of my Life.

FOR, my Heart, I perceive, is the Womb, in which all Sin is first conceiv'd, and from which, my Saviour tells me, proceed evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murders, Thefts, Covetousness, Wickedness, Deceit, Lasciviousness, an evil Eye, Blasphemy, Pride, Foolishness, Mark vii. 21, 22. So that, as ever I would prevent the Commission of these Sins in my Life, I must endeavour to hinder their Conception in my Heart, following the Wise Man's Counsel, to *keep my Heart with all Diligence, because out of it are the Issues of Life*, Prov. iv. 23. Neither is this the only Reason, why I should set so strict a Watch over my Heart, because sinful Thoughts lead to sinful Acts; but because the Thoughts themselves are sinful, yea, the very First-born of Iniquity; which though Men cannot pry into or discover, yet the All-seeing G O D knows and observes, and remembers them, as well as the greatest Actions of all my Life. And Oh! what wicked and prophane Thoughts have I formerly entertain'd, not only against God, but against Christ, by questioning the Justice of His Laws, and doubting of the Truth of His Revelation, so as to make both His Life and Death of none effect to me! Which that they may never be laid to my Charge

Charge hereafter, I humbly beseech God to pardon and absolve me from them, and to give me Grace, for the Remainder of my Life, to be as careful of thinking, as of doing well, and as fearful of offending Him in my Heart, as of transgressing His Laws in my Life and Conversation. To this End,

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to stop every Thought, at its first entring into my Heart, and to examine it, whence it comes, and whither it tends.

SO soon as ever any new Thought begins to bubble in my Soul, I am resolv'd to examine what Stamp it is of, whether it spring from the pure Fountain of Living Waters, or the polluted Streams of my own Affections; as also, which way it tends, or takes its Course, towards the Ocean of Happiness, or the Pit of Destruction. And the Reason of this my Resolution, I draw from the Experience I have had of the Devil's Temptations, and the Working of my own Corruptions; by which I find, that there is no Sin I am betray'd into, but what takes its Rise from my inward Thoughts. These are the Tempters that first present some pleasing Object to my View, and then bias my Understanding, and pervert my Will, to comply with the Suggestions. So that, tho' the Spirit of GOD is pleas'd to dart a Beam into my Heart at the same time, and shew me the odious and dangerous Effects of such Thoughts; yet, I know not how or why, I find a prevailing Suggestion within, that tells me, 'tis but a Thought, and that so long as it goes no farther, it cannot do me much Hurt. Under this specious Colour and Pretence, I secretly persuade myself to dwell a little longer upon it; and finding my Heart pleased and delighted with its natural Issue, I give it a little farther Indulgence, till, at last, my Desire breaks out into a Flame, and will be satisfied with nothing less than the Enjoyment of the Object it is exercised upon. And what Water can quench such a rag-

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ing Fire, as is thus kindled by the Devil, and blown up by the Bellows of my own inordinate Affections, which the more I think of, the more I increase the Flame? How nearly, therefore, does it concern me to take up this *Resolution*, of setting a constant Watch and Guard at the Door of my Heart, that nothing may enter in without a strict Examination? Not as if I could examine every particular Thought that arises in my Heart, for by that means I should do nothing else but examine my Thoughts without Intermission. But this I must do: Whosoever I find any Thought that bears the Face or Appearance of Sin, I must throw it aside with the utmost Abhorrence: And when it comes in Disguise, as the Devil under *Samuel's* Mantle, or when it is a Thought I never conceived before, and know not but it may be *bad*, as well as *good*; then, before I suffer it to settle upon my Spirits, I must examine, as well as I can, whether it be sent from Heaven or Hell, and what Message it comes about, and what will be the Issue of it. And thus, by the Divine Assistance, I shall let nothing into my Heart, but what will bring me nearer to my GOD, and set me at a greater Distance from the Evil and Punishment of Sin. Neither do I think it my Duty only to be so watchful against such thoughts as are in themselves *sinful*; but,

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to be as fearful to let in vain, as careful to keep out sinful Thoughts.

I Do not look upon *vain* Thoughts as only tending to *Sin*, but as in themselves *sinful*; for that which makes *Sin* to be *Sin*, is the want of Conformity to the Will of GOD; and that *vain* Thoughts are not conformable and agreeable to the Divine Will, appears, in that GOD Himself, by the Mouth of his Royal Prophet, expressly saith, *I hate vain Thoughts*, Ps. cxix. 113. Again, *vain* Thoughts are therefore *sinful*, because they have in them nothing that can denominate them *good*: For, as in a Moral Sense, there

96 **R E S O L U T I O N S.**

there is never a particular Individual *Act*, so neither is there any particular *Thought*, but what is either *good* or *bad*, in some respect or other. There is not a Moment of my Life; but 'tis my Duty either to be *thinking*, or *speaking*, or *doing Good*: So that whensoever I am not thus employed, I come short of my Duty, and by consequence, am guilty of Sin.

BUT what are these *vain Thoughts*, I am thus resolving against; Why all Wandrings and Distractions in Prayer, or in Hearing the Word of GOD; all useless, trifling and impertinent Thoughts, that do not belong to, nor further, the Work I am about, the grand Affair of my Salvation, may properly be called *vain Thoughts*. And alas! What Swarms of these are continually crowding into my Heart? How have I thought away whole Hours together, about I know not what *Chimeras*, whereof one scarce ever depends upon another: Sometimes entertaining myself with the Pleasures of Sense, as eating and drinking, and such-like earthly Enjoyments; sometimes building Castles in the Air, and clambering up to the Pinacle of Wealth and Honour, which I am not half way got up to, but down I fall again into a Fool's Paradise?

OR, if I chance, at any time, to think a good while upon one Thing, it is just to as much purpose as the Man's Thoughts were, which I have sometimes heard of, and smiled at, who having an Egg in his Hand, by a sort of Chimerical *Climax*, improved it into an Estate: but while he was thus pleasing himself with these imaginary Products, down drops the Egg, and all his Hens, and Cattle, and House and Land, that he had raised from it, vanished in the Fall. These, and such-like, are the *vain Thoughts*, that I must for the future, endeavour to avoid; and though it will be impossible for me wholly to prevent their first entring into my Mind, yet I resolve by the Grace of GOD, not to harbour or dwell upon, or delight myself in them. And then notwithstanding they are, in some Sense, sinful, yet they will not be imputed to me as such, provided I use my utmost Endeavours to avoid them. Which that I may be the better able to do.

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RESOLUTION IV.

I am resolved, by the Grace of G O D, to be always exercising my Thoughts upon good Objects, that the Devil may not exercise them upon bad.

THE Soul being a spiritual Substance, is always in Action, and its proper and immediate Act is Thinking, which is as natural and proper to the Soul, as Extension is to the Body: 'Tis that upon which all the other Actings of the Soul are grounded; so that neither our Apprehensions of, nor Affections to, any Object can be acted without it. And hence it is, that I think the Soul is very properly defin'd, *Substantia cogitans*, a thinking Substance; for there is nothing else but a Spirit can think, and there is no Spirit but always doth think. And this I find by Experience, to be so true and certain, that if at any time I have endeavoured to think of nothing, (as I have sometimes done) I have spent all the Time in thinking upon that very Thought.

How much, therefore, doth it concern me to keep my Soul in continual Exercise upon what is Good; for be sure, if I do not set it on work, the Devil will; and if it do not work for G O D, it will work for him: I know sinful Objects are more agreeable to a sinful Soul; but I am sure, holy Thoughts are more conformable to a Holy G O D. Why, therefore, should I spend and ravel out my Thoughts upon that which will destroy my Soul? No, no; I shall henceforth endeavour always to be employing my Thoughts upon something that is Good; and, therefore, to have good Subjects constantly at hand to think upon, as the Attributes of G O D, the Glory of Heaven, the Misery of Hell, the Merits of C H R I S T, the Corruption of my Nature, the Sinfulness of Sin, the Beauty of Holiness, the Vanity of the World, the Immortality of the Soul, and the like; and likewise to take Occasion, from the Objects I meet or converse with in the World, to make such Remarks and Reflections, as may be for my Advantage or Improvement in my Spiritual Affairs. For, there is nothing in the World, though it

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be never so *bad*, but what I may exercise *good* Thoughts upon : And my Neglect in this kind, has been the real Occasion of those vain Thoughts that have hitherto possessed my Soul. I have not kept them close to their Work, to think upon what is Good, and therefore, they have run out into those Extravagancies, which, by the Blessing of GOD, in the Performance of these *Resolutions*, I shall endeavour to avoid.

IT is, indeed, a singular Advantage of that High and Heavenly Calling, in which the Most High, of His Wisdom and Goodness, has been pleased to place me, that all the Objects we converse with, and all the Subjects we exercise our Thoughts upon, are either GOD and Heaven, or something relating to them. So that we need not go out of our common Road to meet with this heavenly Company, Good Thoughts. But then, I do not account every Thought of GOD, or Heaven, which only swims in my Brain, to be a good and holy Thought, unless it sinks down into my Heart and Affections, i. e. unless to my Meditations of GOD and another World, I join a longing for Him, a rejoicing in Him, and a solacing myself in the Hopes of a future Enjoyment of Him. Neither will this be any Hindrance, but a Furtherance to my Studies ; for, as I know no Divine Truths as I ought, unless I know them practically and experimentally ; so I never think I have any clear Apprehensions of GOD, till I find my Affections are inflamed towards Him ; or that I ever understand any Divine Truth aright, till my Heart be brought into Subjection to it.

THIS *Resolution*, therefore, extends itself, not only to the subject *Matter* of my Thoughts, but also to the *Quality* of them, with regard to Practice, that they may influence my Life and Conversation, that whether I speak, or write, or eat, or drink, or whatsoever I do, I may still season all ; even my commonest Actions, with Heavenly Meditations ; there being nothing I can set my Hand to, but I may likewise set my Heart a working upon it. Which accordingly I shall endeavour, by the Blessing of GOD, to do. And, for the better ordering of my Thoughts,

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, so to marshall my Thoughts, that they may not one jostle out another, nor any of them prejudice the Business I am about.

MY Soul being by Nature swift and nimble, and by Corruption inordinate and irregular in its Operations, I can never set myself to think upon one thing, but presently another presses in, and another after that, and so on, till by thinking of so many things at once, I can think upon nothing to any purpose. And hence it is, that I throw away thousands of Thoughts each Day for nothings, which, if well managed, might prove very profitable and advantagious to me. To prevent, therefore, this tumultuous, desultory, and useless working of my Thoughts, as I have already resolved to fix my Heart upon necessary, and useful, and good Objects, so, to prevent my Thoughts rolling from one Thing to another, or leaping from the Top of one, to the Height of another Object, I must now endeavour to rank and digest them into Order and Method, that they may, for the future, be more steady and regular in their Pursuits. I know, the Devil and my own corrupt Nature will labour to break the Ranks, and confound the Order of them: What Stratagems therefore, shall I use, to prevent this Confusion? I shall endeavour, by the Grace of GOD, whensoever I find any idle Thoughts begin to frisk and rove out of the way, to call them in again, and set them to work upon one or other of these Objects before-mentioned, and to keep them, for some time, fix'd and intent upon it; and, considering the Relations and Dependencies of one thing upon another, nor to suffer any foreign Ideas, such, I mean, as are impertinent to the Chain of Thoughts I am upon, to jostle them out, or divert my Mind another way. No, not though they be otherwise good Thoughts; for Thoughts in themselves good, when they crowd in unseasonably, are sometimes attended with very ill Effects, by interrupting and preventing

venting some good Purposes and Resolutions, which might prove more effectual for promoting GOD's Glory, the Good of others, and the Comfort of our own Souls.

THESE, and such like, are the Methods by which I design and resolve to regulate my Thoughts: And since I can do nothing without the Divine Assistance, I earnestly beg of GOD to give me such a Measure of his Grace, as may enable me effectually to put these *Resolutions* in Practice, that I may not think and resolve in vain.



Concerning my AFFECTIONS.

BUT whilst I am thus ranging my Thoughts, I find something of a Passion or Inclination within me, either drawing me to, or driving me from, every thing I think on; so that I cannot so much as think upon a Thought, but 'tis either pleasing or displeasing to me, according to the Agreeableness or Disagreeableness of the Object it is plac'd upon, or to my natural Affections. If it comes under the pleasing Dress and Appearance of Good, I readily chuse and embrace it; if otherwise, I am as eagerly bent to refuse and reject it. And these two Acts of the Will are naturally founded in those two reigning Passions of the Soul, Love and Hatred, which I cannot but look upon as the Grounds of all its other Motions and Affections. For what are those other Passions of Desire, Hope, Joy, and the like, but Love in its several Postures? And what else can we conceive of Fear, Grief, Abhorrence, &c. but so many different Expressions of Hatred, according to the several Circumstances that the displeasing Object appears to be under. Doth my Understanding represent any thing to my Will, under the Notion of *good* and *pleasant*? My Will is presently taken and delighted with it, and so places its Love upon it; and this Love, if the Object be present, inclines me to embrace it with Joy; if absent, it puts forth itself into Desire; if easy to be attained, it comforts itself with Hope; if difficult, it

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RESOLUTIONS. 101

arms itself with Courage ; if impossible, it boils up into Anger ; if obstructed, it presently falls down into Despair.

On the other hand, Doth my Understanding represent any Object to my Will, as *evil* or *painful*, or *deformed*? How doth it immediately shrink and gather up itself into a Loathing and Hatred of it ! And this Hatred, if the ungrateful Object be present, puts on the mournful Sables of Grief and Sorrow : if it be at any Distance from it, it boils up into Detestation and Abhorrence ; if ready to fall upon it, it shakes for Fear ; if difficult to be prevented, it strengthens itself with Courage and Magnanimity, either to conquer or undergo it. These Affections, therefore, being thus the constant Attendants of my Thoughts, it behoves me as much to look to those, as to the other ; especially, when I consider, that not only my Thoughts, but even my Actions too, are generally determined to Good or Bad, accordingly as they are influenc'd by them. That my Affections, therefore, as well as my Thoughts, may be duly regulated,

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to make my Affections subservient to the Dictates of my Understanding, that my Reason may not follow, but guide my Affections.

THE Affections, being of themselves, blind and inordinate ; unless they are directed by Reason and Judgment, they either move toward a *wrong Object*, or pursue the *right* in a *wrong Way*. And this Judgment must be mature and deliberate, such as arises from a clear Apprehension of the Nature of the Object that affects me, and a thorough Consideration of the several Circumstances that attend it. And great Care must be taken, that I do not impose upon myself by Fancy and Imagination, that I do not mistake Fancy for Judgment, or the capricious Humours of my roving Imagination, for the solid Dictates of a well-guarded Reason : For, my Fancy is as wild

wild as my Affections ; and if *the Blind lead the Blind, they will both fall into the Ditch.*

AND alas ! how oft am I deceiv'd in this manner ! If I do but fancy a thing *good and lovely*, how eager are my Affections in the Pursuit of it ? If I do but fancy any thing *evil and hurtful* to me, how doth my Heart presently rise up against it, or grieve and sorrow for it ? And this, I believe, hath been the Occasion of all the Enormities and Extravagancies I have been guilty of, through the whole Course of my past Life, divesting me of my reasonable Faculties, as to the Acts and Exercises of them, and subjecting my Soul to the Powers of Sense, that I could not raise my Affections above them. Thus, for instance, I have not loved Grace, because my Fancy could not see its Beauty ; I have not loathed Sin, because my Fancy could not comprehend its Misery ; and I have not truly desir'd Heaven, because my Fancy could not reach its Glory : Whereas if the transient Beauty and Lustre of this World's Vanities was but presented to my View, how has my Fancy mounted up to the highest Pitch of Pleasure and Ambition, and inflamed my Heart with the Desire of them.

AND thus, poor Wretch, have I been carried about with the powerful Charms of Sense, without having any other Guide of my Affections, but what is common to the very Brutes that perish ; Fancy supplying that Place in the Sensitive, which Reason does in the Rational Soul. And, alas ! What is this, but, with Nebuchadnezzar, to leave Communion with Men, and herd myself with the Flocks of the Beasts of the Field ? And, what a Shame and Reproach is this to the Image of GOD, in which I was created.

OH ! Thou, that art the Author of my Nature, help me, I beseech Thee, to act more conformably to it, for the time to come ; that I may no longer be bewildered or misled by the blind Conduct of my straggling Fancy, this *Ignis fatuus*, that hurries me over Bogs and Precipices to the Pit of Destruction, but that I may bring all my Affections and Actions to the Standard of a sound and clear Judgment ; and let that Judgment be guided by the unerring Light of Thy Divine Word ; that so I may neither love,

RESOLUTIONS. 103

love, desire, fear, nor detest any thing, but what my Judgment, thus formed, tells me I ought to do!

I K N O W, it will be very hard thus to subject my Affections to the Dictates and Commands of my Judgment: But howsoever, it is my Resolution, this Morning, in the Presence of Almighty G O D, to endeavour it, and never suffer my Heart to settle its Affections upon any Object, till my Judgment hath pass'd its Sentence upon it. And as I will not suffer my Affections to run before my Judgment; so, whenever that is determined, I steadfastly resolve to follow it; that so my Apprehensions and Affections always going together, I may be sure to walk in the direct Path of G O D's Commandments, and enter the Gate that leads to everlasting Life. And, the better to facilitate the Performance of this general Resolution, it being necessary to descend to Particulars.

R E S O L U T I O N II.

I am resolved, by the Grace of G O D, to love G O D, as the best of Goods, and to hate Sin, as the worst of Evils.

A S G O D is the Center of our *Concupiscent* Affections, so Sin is the Object of those we call *Irascible*: And the Affections of Love and Hatred being the Ground of all the rest, I must have a great Care, that I do not mistake or miscarry in them: For if these be placed upon wrong Objects, 'tis impossible any of the rest should be placed upon right ones. In order, therefore, to prevent such a Miscarriage, as G O D is the greatest Good, and Sin the greatest Evil, I resolve to love G O D above all things else in the World, and to hate Sin to the same Degree; and so to love other things, only in relation to G O D, and to hate nothing, but in reference to Sin.

A s for the first, The loving G O D above all Things, there is nothing seems more reasonable, inasmuch as there is nothing lovely in any Creature, but what it receives from G O D; and by how much the more 'tis like to God, by so much the more 'tis lovely unto us. Hence it is,

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that Beauty, or an exact Symmetry and Proportion of Parts and Colours, so attracts our Love, because it so much resembles GOD, who is Beauty and Perfection itself. And hence it is likewise, that Grace is the most lovely Thing in the World, next to GOD, as being the Image of GOD Himself stamp'd upon the Soul; nay, it is not only the Image and Representation, but 'tis the Influence and Communication of Himself to us; so that the more we have of Grace, we may safely say, so much the more we have of GOD within us. Why, therefore, should I grudge my Love to Him, who only deserves it? who is not only infinitely lovely in Himself, but the Author and Perfection of all Loveliness in His Creatures? Why, the true Reason is, that my Affections have run a gadding without my Judgment, or else my Judgment hath been balk'd or anticipated by my Fancy; whereas, now, that my Apprehensions of GOD are a little cleared up, and my Judgment leads the Way, tho' no body sees me, yet, methinks I cannot but blush at myself, that I should ever lie doting upon these Dreams and Shadows here below, and not fix my Affections upon the infinite Beauty and All-sufficiency of GOD above, who deserves my Love and Admiration so infinitely beyond them. However, therefore, I have heretofore placed my Affections upon other Things above GOD, I am now resolved to love GOD, not only above many, or most Things, but above all Things else in the World.

AND here, by loving GOD, I do not understand that *sensitive* Affection I place upon *material* Objects; for it is impossible, that that should be fixed upon GOD, who is a pure *Spiritual* Being; but that, as by the deliberate Choice of my Will, I take Him for my chieftest Good, so I ought to prefer Him as such, before my nearest and dearest Possessions, Interests, or Relations, and whatsoever else may at any time stand in Competition with Him.

AND thus, as I shall endeavour to *love* GOD, so likewise to *hate* Sin, above all things: And this is as necessary as the former; for all Things have something of Good in them, as they are made by GOD, but Sin being, in its own Nature, a Privation of Good, and directly opposite to the Nature and Will of GOD, (as I have before shewed)

RESOLUTIONS. 105

shewed) it has nothing of Beauty or Amiableness to recommend it to my Affections. On the contrary, 'tis a Compound of Deformity and Defilement, that is always attended with Punishment and Misery; and must, therefore, be the Object of my Hatred and Abhorrence, wherefover I find it. For, as GOD is the Center of all that is Good, so is Sin the Fountain of all the Evil in the World. All the Strife and Contention, Ignominy and Disgrace, Misfortunes and Afflictions that I observe in the World; all the Diseases of my Body, and Infirmities of my Mind; all the Errors of my Understanding, and Irregularities of my Will and Affections; in a Word, all the Evils whatsoever, that I am affected with, or subject to, in this World, are still the Fruits and Effects of Sin: For, if Man had never offended the chiefest Good, he had never been subject to this Train of Evils which attended his Transgression. Whensoever, therefore, I find myself begin to detest and abhor any Evil, I shall for the future, endeavour to turn my Eyes to the Spring-Head, and loath and detest the Fountain that sends forth all those bitter and unwholesome Streams, as well as the Channels of those corrupt Hearts in which they flow. And for this Reason, I resolve to hate Sin wherefover I find it, whether in myself or in others, in the best of Friends, as well as the worst of Enemies. Love, I know, and Charity, covers a multitude of Sins, and where we love the Man, we are all of us but too apt to overlook, or excuse his Faults. For the Prevention of this, therefore, I firmly resolve, in all my Expressions of Love to my Fellow-Creatures, so to love the Person, as yet to hate his Sins; and so to hate his Sins, as yet to love his Person. The last of which, I hope. I shall not find hard to practise, my Nature, by the Blessing of GOD, being not easily inclined to hate any Man's Person whatsoever; and the former will not be much more difficult, when I consider, that by how much more I love my Friend, by so much more should I hate whatsoever will be offensive or destructive to him.

HAVING thus fix'd my *Resolutions*, with regard to those two Commanding Passions of my Soul, *Love* and *Hatred*,

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolved, by the Assistance of Divine Grace, to make GOD the principal Object of my Joy, and Sin the principal Object of my Grief and Sorrow; so as to grieve for Sin more than Suffering, and for Suffering, only for Sin's Sake.

THE Affections of Joy and Grief are the immediate Issues of Love and Hatred, and, therefore, not at all to be separated in their Object. Having therefore, resolved to *love*, I cannot but resolve likewise to *rejoyce in GOD* above all Things? for the same Measure of Love I have towards any Thing, the same Measure of Complacency and Delight I must necessarily have in the Enjoyment of it. As, therefore, I love GOD above all Things, and other Things only in Subserviency to Him, so must I rejoice in GOD above all Things, and in other Things only as coming from Him. I know, I not only may, but must rejoice, in the Mercies and Blessings that GOD confers upon me; but 'tis still my Duty to rejoice more in what GOD is in Himself, than in what He is pleased to communicate to me: So that I am not only bound to rejoice in GOD, when I have *nothing else*, but when I have *all things else* to rejoice in. Let therefore my Riches, Honours, or my Friends fail me: Let my Pleasures, my Health and Hope, and All, fail me; I am still resolved by His Grace, to rejoice in the L O R D, and to joy in the GOD of my Salvation. On the other hand, Let Honour or Riches be multiplied upon me, Let Joy and Pleasure, and all that a carnal Heart, (like mine) can wish for or desire, be thrown upon me? yet am I still resolved, that as it is my Business to serve GOD, so shall it be my Delight and Comfort to rejoice in Him.

AND as GOD shall thus be my chiefest Joy, so shall Sin be my greatest Grief: for I account no Condition miserable, but that which results from, or leads me unto Sin: So that when any thing befalls me, which may bear the Face of Suffering, and fill my Heart with Sorrow,

RESOLUTIONS.

107

I shall still endeavour to keep off the Smart, till I know from whence it comes. If Sin has kindled the Fire of GOD's Wrath against me, and brought these Judgments upon me, Oh ! what a heavy Load shall I then feel upon my Soul ? and how shall I groan and complain under the Burden of it ; But if there be nothing of the Poison of Sin dropp'd into this Cup of Sorrows, tho' it may perhaps prove bitter to my Senfes, yet it will, in the end, prove healthful to my Soul ; as being not kindled at the Furnace of GOD's Wrath, but at the Flames of His Love and Affection for me. So that I am so far from having Cause to be sorry for the Sufferings he brings upon me, that I have much greater Cause to rejoice in them, as being an Argument of the Love and Affection he bears to me ; *For whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6.

AND having thus-resolved to rejoice in nothing but GOD, and grieve for nothing but Sin, I must not be cast down and dejected at every Providence which the Men here below count a Loss or Affliction ; for, certainly, all the Misery I find in any thing extrinsical, is created by myself; nothing but what is in me being properly an Affliction to me ; so that 'tis my Fancy that is the Ground of Misery in all things without myself. If I did not fancy some Evil or Misery in the Loss of such an Enjoyment, it would be no Misery at all to me; because I am still the same as I was, and have as much as I had before. For 'tis GOD that is the Portion of my Soul ; and, therefore, should I lose every Thing I have in the World besides, yet having GOD, I cannot be said to lose any thing, because I have Him that hath, and is, all-things in Himself. Whensoever, therefore any thing befalls me, that uses to be Matter of Sorrow and Dejection to me, I must not presently be affected with, or dejected at it, but still behave myself like an Heir of Heaven, and living above the Smiles and Frowns of this World, account nothing Matter of Joy, but so far as I enjoy of GOD's Love ; nor any thing Matter of Sorrow, but so much as I see of His Anger in it.

RESOLUTION IV.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to desire spiritual Mercies more than temporal; and temporal Mercies only in reference to spiritual.

HAVING rectified the Balance of my Judgment according to the Scripture; when I would begin to weigh *temporal* Things with *spiritual*, I find there is no Proportion, and so no Comparison to be made betwixt them. And will any wise Man, then, that pretends to Reason, be at a Stand which of these to chuse, which to esteem the best, or desire most? Alas! What is there in the World, that can fill the vast Desires of my Soul, but only He, who is infinitely above Me and my Desires too? Will Riches do it? No, I may as soon undertake to fill my Barns with Grace, as my Heart with Gold, and as easily stuff my Bags with Virtue as ever satisfy my Desires with Wealth. Do I hunt after Pleasures? These may, indeed, charm and delight my Brutish Senses, but can never be agreeable, or proportionate to my Spiritual Faculties. Do I grasp at Honour and Popularity? These, again, are as empty and unsatisfying as the former; they may make me look High and Great in the Eye of the World, turn my Head giddy with Applause, or puff up my Heart with Pride, but they can never fill up the Measure of its Desires. And thus, if I should have the whole World at my Command, and could, with *Alexander*, wield both Sword and Scepter over all the Nations and Languages of it, would this content me? or rather, should I not sit down and weep, with him, "that I had not another World to conquer and possess? Whereas, GOD being an *infinite* Good, 'tis impossible for me to desire any thing, which I may not enjoy in Him and His Mercies: Let me, or any other Creature, extend our Desires never so far, still the Graces and Blessings of this *Infinite* GOD will be infinitely beyond them all: Insomuch that tho' Ten Thousand Worlds are not able to satisfy One Soul, yet One GOD is able to satisfy Ten Thousand Souls;

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yea, and Ten Millions more to them, as well as if there was only One Soul in all the World to satisfy.

COME, therefore, my dear Lord and Saviour! whilst thy Servant is breathing after Thee; and possess my Heart with the Spiritual Blessings of Grace and Faith, Peace and Charity; and let none of these empty and transient Delights of this World stand in Competition with them! Thou art the Source and Center of all my Wishes and Desires; even *as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God!* When shall I appear in Thy Presence? When, when shall that blessed Time come, that I shall see Thy Sacred Majesty, Face to Face? This is a Mercy, I confess, which I cannot expect, whilst imprison'd in the Body; but, howsoever, tho' I must not yet appear before Thee, do Thou vouchsafe to appear in Me, and give me such Glympses of Thy Love and Graces here, as may be an Earnest of the Bliss and Glory I am to enjoy hereafter!

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to hope for nothing so much as the Promises, and to fear nothing so much as the Threatnings of GOD.

MY Soul being inflamed with holy Desires after God, my Heart cannot but be big with the Hopes and Expectation of Him: And, truly, as there is nothing that I can absolutely desire, so neither is there any thing that I can assuredly hope for and depend upon, but GOD Himself, and the Promises He has made to me in His Divine Word. For, as all things derive their Being and Subsistence from Him, so they are all at His Beck and Command, and are acted and influenced as His Wisdom and Pleasure sees fit to order them. All the Secondary Causes are in His Hand, and He turns them which way soever He will; so that, however improbable and disproportionate the Means He uses may appear to be, He never fails to accomplish the End, or whatever he *wills* or *decrees* to be done. And, therefore, where-ever I meet with

110 *RESOLUTIONS.*

any Promises made over to the faithful in His Sacred Word (since they are the Promises of one who is infinitely *just* and *true*, who can neither dissemble, nor deceive) I cannot in the least doubt but they will be punctually fulfilled; and if I am of that happy Number (as I trust, thro' the Merits of CHRIST, and my own sincere Endeavours, I shall approve myself to be) I have as much Assurance of being Partaker of them, as if I had them actually in Possession, or as any of the faithful Servants of GOD, who have already experienced the Accomplishment of them.

BUT, suppose GOD should not favour me with the bright Part of His Promises, but, instead of the Blessings of Health and Prosperity, should visit me with Crosses and Afflictions; yet, I have still the same Grounds for my Hope and Confidence in Him, and may say, with the Psalmist, *The Lord is my Helper, I will not fear what the Devil, or Man, can do unto me.* For, tho' their Spite and Malice may sometimes cross, afflict, and persecute me; yet, since I am assur'd, they are only as *Instruments* in the Hand of GOD, that cannot go beyond their Commission, nor make me suffer more than I am able to bear, I may comfort myself, under all these Afflictions, by the same Divine Promise that S. Paul had recourse to, on the like Occasion, to wit, *That all shall work together for Good to them that love GOD, who are the called, according to His Purpose,* Rom. viii. 28. The Devil could not touch the Possessions of Job, till he had receiv'd a Commission from GOD; nor could he come near his Body till that Commission was renew'd; and so, neither can he, or any Creature whatsoever, throw any Evil upon me, without the Divine Permission; and even That, tho' it seems to be Evil, shall really, in the End turn to my Benefit and Advantage. Oh! What a Sovereign Antidote is this against all Despondency and Despair, even under the deepest and severest Trials? Permit me, O my GOD, to apply this sacred Promise to myself, and say, I am assur'd of it; by my own Experience. For I can hardly remember any one thing that ever happened to me, in the whole Course of my Life, even to the Crossing of my most earnest Desires, and highest Expectations, but what

RESOLUTIONS.

F.I.

what I must confess, to the Praise of thy Grace and Goodness, has really, in the End, turn'd to my Advantage another way: Oh! make me truly sensible of all thy Promises to, and Dealings with me, that whatever Storms and Surges may arise in the tempestuous Ocean of this transient World, I may still fix the Anchor of my Hope and Happiness in Thee, who art the Source and Spring of all Blessings, and without whom no Evil or Calamity could ever befall me!

AND as the *Promises* of God, upon all these Accounts, are to be the *Object* of my *Hope*; so are His *Threatnings* to be of my *Fear* and *Aversation*: As the former are of excellent use to *raise* and *revive* the most drooping *Hearts*, so the latter are of Weight enough to *sink* and *depress* the stoutest and most undaunted *Spirits*, and make them lick up the *Dust* of *Horror* and *Despair*. Not to mention any thing of the exquisite and eternal Miseries denounc'd against the Wicked in the next World, with which the Scriptures every where abound, there is one Punishment threaten'd to be inflicted here, which is, of itself, sufficient to this; and that is, in *Mal. ii. 2.* *If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to Heart, to give Glory to My Name, saith the LORD of Hosts. I will even send a Curse upon you, and I will curse your Blessings.* Most dreadful Sentence! which none, that consider aright, can be able to read, without Trembling and Astonishment. Alas! if God should curse me, where should I seek for Blessing, since He is the only Fountain from which it flows, and by which it is convey'd and communicated to me? And if He should curse my very Blessings, what could I hope for, but Misery and Despair? My Health, my Wealth, my Preferments, my Relations, nay, my very Life itself, would all be accrû'd to me; and what is yet worse, even my spiritual Exercises and Performances, upon which I chiefly build my Hopes of Happiness, my Preaching, Praying, and Communicating, would all become a Snare and a Curse to me: Yea, and *CHRIST* himself, who came into the World to bless and redeem me, if I walk not in His Fear, believe not His Gospel, or give not Glory to His Name, will himself be a Curse and Condemnation to me. So that I may say of every thing I have, or enjoy, or expect, All

these GOD has made Curses to me, because I have not bless'd and glorify'd him in them. Oh ! who would not tremble and be wrought upon by these Threatnings ? Who would not fear Thee, O King of Nations, who art thus terrible in Thy Judgments ? Who would not love and obey Thee, who art so gracious in thy Promises ? Teach me, I beseech Thee, so to place my Fear upon the former, that I may still fix my Hope upon the latter, that tho' I fear Thy dreadful Curses, yet I may never despair of Thy tender Mercies.

RESOLUTION VI.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to arm myself with that spiritual Courage and Magnanimity, as to press through all Duties and Difficulties whatsoever, for the Advancement of GOD's Glory, and my own Happiness.

CHISTIANITY is well term'd a *Warfare*, for a *Warfare* it is, wherein no Danger can be prevented, no Enemy conquered, no Victory obtained, without much Courage and Resolution. I have not only many outward Enemies to grapple with, but I have myself, my worst Enemy to encounter and subdue. As for those Enemies which are not near me, by the Assistance of GOD's Spirit, I can make pretty good Shift to keep them at the Sword's Point : But this Enemy, that is gotten within me, has so often foil'd and disarm'd me, that I have Reason to say, as *David* did of his Enemies, *It is too strong for me* : And, as he said of the Chief of his, *I shall, one Day, fall by the Hands of Saul*; so I have too much Occasion to say, I shall fall by myself, as being myself the greatest Enemy to my own spiritual Interest and Concerns. How necessary is it, then, that I should raise and muster up all my Force and Courage, put on my spiritual Armour, and make myself strong in the **LORD**, and in the Power of his Might ? I know, I must strive, before I can enter in at the strait Gate ? I must win the Crown, before I can wear it ; and be a Member of the Church Militant, before I be admitted into the Church Triumphant.

RESOLUTIONS.

113

phant. In a word, I must go through a solitary Wilderness, and conquer many Enemies, before I come to the Land of Canaan; or else I must never be possessed of it. What then? shall I loose my Glory, to balk my Duty? Shall I let go my glorious and eternal Possession? to save myself from a seeming Hardship, which the Devil would persuade me to be a Trouble and an Affliction? Alas! if CHRIST had laid aside the great Work of my Redemption, to avoid the Undergoing of God's Anger and Man's Malice, what a miserable Condition had I been in? And, therefore, whatever Taunts and Reproaches I meet with, from the Presumptuous and Prophane, the Infidel and Atheistical Reprobates of the Age; let them laugh at my Profession, or mock at what they are pleased to call Preciseness; let them defraud me of my just Rights, or traduce or bereave me of my Good Name and Reputation; let them vent the utmost of their poisonous Malice and Envy against me; I have this comfortable Reflexion still to support me, that if I suffer all this for CHRIST's Sake, 'tis in the Cause of one who suffered a thousand times more for mine; and, therefore, it ought to be Matter of Joy and Triumph, rather than of Grief and Dejection to me: Especially considering that *these my light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, will work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.* Upon the Prospect of which, I firmly resolve, notwithstanding the growing Strength of Sin, and the over-bearing Prevalency of my own corrupt Affections, to undertake all Duties, and undergo all Miseries, that GOD, in His Infinite Wisdom thinks fit to lay upon me, or exercise my Patience in.

RESOLUTION VII.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, so to be angry, as not to sin, and therefore to be angry at nothing but Sin.

THE former Part of the Resolution is founded in the express Command of St. Paul, *Be ye angry, and sin*

not

114 **RESOLUTIONS.**

not, Eph. iv. 26. And the latter is an *Explication of*, as well as an *Inference* drawn from it. For, if Anger be not only lawful, but a Duty, as is here supposed, when it does not involve us in Sin; the only Difficulty is, to know how that Passion ought to be qualified, to justify the Exercise of it, without being guilty of Sin: And the Circumstances or Qualifications required for this, are, first, that it be placed upon a due Object; and, secondly, that it do not exceed its proper Bounds.

N o w, as nothing can deserve my Anger, but what is disagreeable to my Nature, and offensive to the Author of it, so nothing but Sin can properly be called its Object. The chief thing that I am to aim at in my Actions, is the honouring, serving, and pleasing of God; and how can I serve and please God, in being angry at any thing but what I know is displeasing to him? I may be scorn'd, reproach'd, and vilify'd among my Equals, or accused, condemned, and punished by my Superiors, and these are Treatments that are but too apt to raise and transport Men into Anger and Revenge: But then, before I suffer this Passion to boil up in me, I ought to consider whether I have not behav'd myself so, as to deserve this Sort of Treatment; if I have, then there is no Injury or Injustice done me thereby, and, therefore, I ought not to be angry at it: If I have not, I must not be angry at the Persons who act thus falsely and unjustly against me, but only at their Sin: for to speak properly, it is not the Person that offends me, but the Sin. And this, not because it is injurious to me, but because it is offensive and displeasing to God himself; for to be angry at any thing but what displeases God, is to displease God in being angry. Whenever, therefore, I receive any Affronts or Provocations of this Nature, I am resolv'd, by God's Grace assisting my Endeavours, never to be moved or troubled at them, farther than they are in their own Nature sinful, and at the same time abstracting the Sin from the Persons, to pray for the Pardon of those that are guilty of it; and not only so, but according to the Command and Example of my Saviour, even to love them too.

B U T, how shall I be sure to be angry at nothing but Sin, and so not to sin in my Anger, when every petty Trifle

Trifle or cross Accident is so apt to raise this Passion in me? Why, the best Method I can take, is, that which the Wise Man directs me to, *not to be hasty in my Spirit*, Eccles. vii. 9. but, *to defer my Anger according to Discretion*, Prov. xix. 11. So that, whensoever any thing happens that may incense and inflame my Passion, I must immediately stop its Career, and suspend the Acts of it, till I have duly consider'd the Motives and Occasions that raised it. And, as this will be a very good Means to regulate the *Object* of my Anger, so likewise the *Measure* of it: For, he that is slow to Wrath, takes Time to consider, and, by Consequence, puts his Passion under the Conduct of his Reason; and whoever does so, will never suffer it to be transported beyond its proper Bounds. Whereas he, whose Anger is like Tinder, that catches as soon as the Spark is upon it, and who uses no Means to stop its spreading, is presently blown up into a furious Flame, which, before 'tis extinguish'd, may do more Mischief than he is ever able to repair; for, no Man knows, whither his Anger may hurry him, when once it has got the Mastery of him. In order, therefore, to prevent the fatal Consequences of this Passion, I now resolve never to speak or do any thing, while I am under the Influence of it, but take time to consider with myself, and reflect upon the several Circumstances of the Action or Object it arises from, as well as the Occasion and Tendency of it; and as oft as I find any thing in it displeasing to God, to be regularly angry at that, to correct, rebuke, and reprove it, with a Zeal and Fervour of Spirit, suitable to the Occasion; but still to keep within the Bounds of the truly Christian Temper, which is always distinguish'd by Love and Charity, and exercises itself in Meekness and Moderation. And, Oh! what a sedate and contented Spirit will this *Resolution* breed in me? How easy and quiet shall I be under all Circumstances? Whilst others are peevish and fretful, and torment themselves with every petty Trifle that does but cross their Inclinations, or seems to be injurious to them; or fall into the other Extreme, of a *Stoical Apathy* or *Insensibility*; I shall, by this *Resolution*, maintain a Medium betwixt both, and possess my Soul in Peace and Patience:

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Concerning my WORDS.

HAVING thus far cleans'd the Fountain of my Heart, with regard to my Thoughts and Affections, which are the immediate Issues of my active Soul, the next thing incumbent upon me, is to regulate my outward Conversation, both with respect to my Words and Actions. As to the first, the Holy Scripture assures me, that the Tongue is a *World of Iniquity*, James iii. 6. And again, that *it is an unruly Evil which no Man can tame*, v. 8. But is it, indeed, so unruly? Then there is the more Occasion to have it govern'd and subdu'd; and, since that is not to be done by Man alone, it is still more necessary, that I should call in the Assistance of that Divine Spirit that gives this Character of it, first to fix my *Resolutions*, and then to strengthen me in the Performance of them. I stedfastly purpose to imitate the Royal Psalmist, in this Particular, and *to take heed to my Ways, that I offend not with my Tongue*, Psal. xxxix. 1. Yea, I am resolved, with Holy Job, that *all the while my Breath, and the Spirit of God, is in my Nostrils, my Lips shall not speak Wickedness, nor my Tongue utter Deceit*, Job xxvii. 3, 4. But, since it is such an unruly Instrument, so very difficult to be bridled or restrain'd, Do thou, O GOD, who first madest it, enable me to get the Mastery of it! *Set a Watch, O Lord, before my Mouth, and keep the Door of my Lips, that with St. Paul, I may speak forth the Words of Truth and Soborness*, and make this unruly Evil a happy Instrument of much Good! which that I may do,

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, never to speak much, lest I often speak too much, and not to speak at all, rather than to no purpose.

IT is the *Voice of Fools that is known by the Multitude of Words*, Eccl. v. 3. In which there are divers *Vanities*,

RESOLUTIONS. 117

ties, ver. 6. and *Sin* too, Prov. x. 19. whereas, *he that refraineth his Lips, is wise.* This is that Piece of Christian Wisdom, which I am now resolving to look after; and, therefore, never to deliver my Words out to the World by Number, but by Weight, not by Quantity but Quality: not hiding my Meaning under ambiguous Terms and Expressions, but fitting Words exactly to express my Meaning: Not abusing those I converse with, with Circles of Impertinence and Circumlocution, but coming directly to the Matter by the straight Line of apt Expressions, so as never to speak more than the Matter requireth, nor to speak at all, when no Matter requireth. For, why should I spend my Breath for nothing? Alas! that is not all; if I spend it ill, it will be far worse than spending it for nothing; for our Blessed Saviour has told me, that I must answer for every idle and unprofitable, as well as profane Word, Matt. xii. 36. But now, if all the vain Words I ever spoke, should be written, as I have cause to believe they are, in the Book of God's Remembrance, how many vast Volumes *must they make!* and if an *Index* should be made, where to find *profitable*, and where *idle* Words, how few References would there be to the former? What Multitudes to the latter? and what is yet more terrifying) if all these Words should be brought in Judgment against me, at the last Day, how would those very Words then make me speechless? and what Shame and Confusion of Face would they then strike me with? But I trust, through the Blood of my Redeemer, and the Tears of my Repentance, they will all be wash'd and blotted out, before I come to appear before Him. In order to this, as I heartily bewail and detest my former Follies in this respect; so I firmly purpose and resolve to use my utmost Endeavours, for the time to come, not to give Way any more to such idle Words and Expressions, as are likely to be thus prejudicial to my eternal Interest; but always to consider well before-hand, what, and how, and why I speak, and suffer no corrupt Communication to proceed out of my Mouth, but that which is good, to the Use of Edifying, that it may minister Grace to the Hearers, Eph. iv. 29.

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I KNOW, there are some Words, that are purely *jocose*, spoken with no other Intent, but only to promote Mirth, and divert Melancholy; and these Words, so long as they are harmless and innocent, so long as they do not reflect Dishonour upon God, nor injure the Character and Reputation of my Neighbour, are very lawful and allowable; inasmuch as they conduce to the refreshing and reviving of my Spirits, and the Preservation of my Health. But then, I must always take care, *so to wind* and turn my Discourse, that what recreates me in speaking, may profit others when spoke; that my Words may not only be such as have no Malignity in them, but such as may be useful and beneficial; not only such as do no Hurt, but likewise such as may do much Good to others, as well as to myself. To this end, I firmly resolve, by the Grace of God, never to speak only for the Sake of Speaking, but to weigh each Word before I speak it, and consider the Consequence and Tendency of it, whether it may really be the Occasion of Good or Evil, or tend to the edifying or scandalizing of the Person I speak it to.

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, not only to avoid the Wickedness of Swearing falsely, but likewise the very Appearance of Swearing at all.

PERJURY is a Sin condemned by the very Laws of Nature; insomuch that I should wrong my natural Faculties, should I give way to, or be guilty of it. For, the same Nature that tells me, the Person of God is to be adored, tells me likewise, His Name is to be reverenc'd; and what more horrid Impiety can possibly be imagined, than to prostitute the most sacred Name of the most High God, to confirm the Lyes of sinful Men? I know, Swearing in a just Matter, and right Manner, may be as lawful under the New, as under the Old Testament; for thus I find St. Paul saying, *As GOD is true, 2 Cor. i. 18. and ver. 23. I call GOD for a Record upon my Soul;* wherein

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RESOLUTIONS. 119

is contained the very Nature of an Oath, which is, the calling GOD for a Record and a Witness to the Truth of what we speak : But when 'tis to maintain Falshood, which is to an ill Purpose, or lightly and vainly, which is to no Purpose at all, it is a Sin of the highest Aggravation, that ought, with the greatest Detestation and Abhorrence, to be shunned and avoided. God saith by Moses, Lev. xix. 12. *Thou shalt not swear by my Name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the Name of thy GOD : I am the L O R D.* And Exod. xx. 7. Deut. v. 11. *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy GOD in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain.* But farther, GOD says by CHRIST, *Swear not at all, neither by Heaven, for it is GOD's Throne ; nor by the Earth, for it is His Footstool, &c.* So that not only, By GOD, and by JESUS, are Oaths, but swearing by any of GOD's Creatures, is, in a manner, to swear by GOD Himself, I swear by the Heavens; can the Heavens hear, or witness what I say ? No ; it is the Glorious Majesty that rules there, that I call upon to witness the Truth of the Words I speak, and the Sinfulness of my Heart for Swearing to them. Do I swear by my Faith ? But how is that ? Can Faith testify what I say ? No, 'tis only He that wrought this Faith in my Heart, can witness the Truth of my Words. And, if I swear by the Gifts of GOD, I do in effect, swear by GOD Himself; otherwise, I ascribe that to the Creature, which is only compatible to the Glorious Creator, even the Knowledge of the Thoughts of my Heart, how secret soever they be.

BUT, again, there is more in the third Commandment, than the Devil would persuade the World there is ; for, when GOD commands me *not to take His Name in vain*, 'tis more than if He had commanded me only not to swear by it : For, I cannot persuade myself, but that every time I speak of GOD, when I do not think of Him, I take His Name in vain : and, therefore, I ought to endeavour to avoid even the mentioning of GOD, as well as Swearing by Him, unless upon urgent Occasions, and with Reverence and Respect becoming His Majesty ; for, questionless. *O Lord, and O God,* may be spoken as vainly, as *By Lord, and By God.* And therefore, I ought never to speak such

such Words, without thinking really in my Heart, what I speak openly with my Mouth, lest my Name be written amongst those that *take the Name of GOD in vain*. But farther still, I am resolved not only to avoid downright Swearing, but likewise the very Appearance of it: So that what doth but look like an Oath, shall be as odious to me, as what looks like nothing else.

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to make my Tongue and Heart go together, so as never to speak with the one, what I do not think in the other.

AS my Happiness consisteth in Nearness and Vicinity, so doth my Holiness in Likeness and Conformity to the Chiefest Good. I am so much the Better, as I am like the Best; and so much the Holier, as I am more conformable to the Holiest, or rather to Him who is Holiness itself. Now one great Title which the Most High is pleased to give Himself, and by which He is pleased to reveal Himself to us, is, the **GOD** of **Truth**: So that I shall be so much the liker to the **GOD** of **Truth**, by how much I am the more constant to the **Truth of GOD**. And the farther I deviate from this, the nearer I approach to the Nature of the Devil, who is the *Father of Lyes*, and *Lyars* too, *John viii. 44*. And hence it is, that of all the Sins the Men of Fashion are guilty of, they can least endure to be charged of Lying. To give a Man the Lye, or to say, *You lye*, is looked upon as the greatest Affront that can be put upon them. And why so? But only, because this Sin of Lying makes them so like their Father the Devil, that a Man had almost as well call them Devils, as Lyars; and, therefore to avoid the Scandal and Reproach, as well as the dangerous Malignity of this damnable Sin, I am resolv'd, by the Blessing of **GOD**, always to tune my Tongue an *Unison* to my Heart, so as never to speak any thing,

thing, but what I think really to be true. So that, if ever I speak what is not true, it shall not be the Error of my Will, but of my Understanding.

I K N O W, Lyes are commonly distinguished into *Officious*, *Pernicious*, and *Jocose*: and some may fancy some of them more tolerable than others. But, for my own part, I think they are all pernicious, and, therefore, not to be jested withal, nor indulged, upon any Pretence or Colour whatsoever. Not as if it was a Sin, not to speak exactly as a Thing is in itself, or as it seems to me in its literal Meaning, without some Liberty granted to Rhetorical Tropes and Figures; [for, so the Scripture itself would be chargeable with Lyes: many Things being contained in it, which are not true in a literal Sense.] But, I must so use *Rhetorical*, as not to abuse my *Christian Liberty*; and, therefore, never to make use of Hyperboles, Ironies, or other Tropes, and Figures, to deceive or impose upon my Auditors, but only for the better adorning, illustrating, or confirming the Matter.

B U T, there is another Sort of Lyes most Men are apt to fall into, and they are *Promisory Lyes*; to avoid which, I am resolved never to promise any thing with my Mouth, but what I intend to perform in my Heart; and never to intend to perform any Thing but what, I am sure, I can perform. For, this is the Cause and Occasion of most *Promisory Lyes*, that we promise that *absolutely*, which we should promise only *conditionally*: For, though I may intend to do as I say now, yet there are a thousand weighty Things may intervene, which may turn the Balance of my Intentions, or otherwise hinder the Performance of my Promise. So that, unless I be absolutely sure I can do a Thing, I must never absolutely promise to do it; and, therefore, in all such Promises, shall still put in, *GOD willing*, or by the help of *GOD*; at the same time, lifting up my Heart to *GOD*, lest I take His Name in vain.

RESOLUTION IV.

I am resolved by the Grace of GOD, to speak of other Mens Sins only before their Faces, and of their Virtues only behind their Backs.

TO commend Men, when they are *present*, I esteem almost as great a piece of Folly, as to reprove them, when they are *absent*; tho' I do confess, in some Cases, and to some Persons, it may be commendable; especially where the Person is not apt to be puffed up, but spurred on by it. But to rail at others, when they hear me not, is the highest Piece of Folly imaginable; for, as 'tis impossible They should get any Good, so 'tis impossible but that I should get much Hurt by it. For, such sort of Words, make the best we can of them, are but idle and unprofitable, and may not only prove injurious to the Person *of whom*, but even *to whom* they are spoken, by wounding the Credit of the former, and the Charity of the latter, and so, by Consequence, my own Soul; nay, even tho' I speak that which is *true* in itself, and known to be so to me: And, therefore, this way of Backbiting ought, by all means, to be avoided.

BUT, I must, much more, have a care of raising *false* Reports concerning any one, or of giving Credit to them that raise them, or of passing my Judgment, till I have weighed the Matter; lest I transgres the Rules of Mercy and Charity, which command me not to censure any one upon others Rumours, or my own Surmises; nay, if the thing be in itself *true*, still to interpret it in the *best* Sense. But, if I must needs be raking in other Mens Sores, it must not be behind their Backs, but before their Faces; for, the one is a great Sin, and the other may be as great a Duty, even to reprove my Neighbour for doing any thing offensive unto *GOD*, or destructive to his own Soul; still endeavouring so to manage the Reproof, as to make his Sin loathsome to him, and prevail upon him, if possible, to forsake it: But, there is a great deal of *Christian* Prudence and Discretion to be used in this, lest others may justly reprove me for my indiscreet Reproof of others.

others. I must still fit my Reproof to the Time when, the Person to whom, and the Sin against which, 'tis designed; still contriving with myself how to carry on this Duty so, as that by *converting a Sinner from the Evil of his Ways, I may save my Soul from Death, and cover a Multitude of Sins*, Jam. v. 22. Not venting my Anger against the Person, but my Sorrow for the Sin that is reproved. Hot, passionate, and reviling Words, will not so much exasperate a Man against his Sin that is reproved, as against the Person that doth reprove it. '*Tis not the Wrath of Man that worketh the Righteousness of GOD*, Jam. i. 10. But this, of all Duties, must be performed with a Spirit of Love and Meekness; I must first insinuate myself into his Affections, and then press his Sin upon his Conscience, and that directly or indirectly, as the Person, Matter, or Occasion shall require, that so he that is reproved by me now, may have Cause to bless GOD for me to all Eternity.

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, always to speak reverently to my Superiors, humbly to my Inferiors, and civilly to All.

THE Most High GOD, the Master of this great Family, the World, for the more orderly Government of it, hath, according to His Infinite Wisdom, set some in higher, some in lower Places, hath made some as Stewards, others as Under-servants; and, according to every Man's Work that He expects from him, He measures out his Talents to him. Blessed be His Name for it, He hath set me in a middle Form, giving me *Agas's Wish*, subject neither to Envy on one hand, nor Pity on the other; so that I have both Superiors to reverence, and Inferiors to descend to. And, accordingly, it is my Duty so to behave myself towards them, that the reverend Expressions of my Mouth, may manifest the obedient Subjection of my Heart, to the Power and Authority GOD has given them

them over me. 'Tis the express Command of the Gospel, that we should render to every Man his Due, *Fear to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour belongeth*, ROM. xiii. 13. which Words plainly imply, both that 'tis *some Mens Due to receive Honour*, and *other Mens Duty to give it*. And, accordingly, we find, *Paul*, when he was brought before *Festus*, doth not say, *Art thou he, whom they call Festus?* or *Thou Festus*, as the misguided Enthusiasts, in our Days, would have said; but, *Most Noble Festus*, ACTS xxvi. 25. In like manner St. *John* doth not call her he writes to, in his Second Epistle, being a Person of Quality, *Woman*, but *Elect Lady*. And, this Sort of Reverence is farther confirm'd to us, not only by the constant Custom of all Nations, in all Ages of the World, but 'tis likewise highly agreeable to the Rules of right Reason, as well as the Order of Government. For, as there is both a Natural and Civil Superiority, a Superiority in Gifts and Age, and a Superiority likewise in Office and Station; so there is nothing can be more necessary, than that there should be, in both these respects, a Reverence and Respect paid to the Persons of Men, answerable to these Distinctions. And therefore, I cannot but condemn that rude and unmanly Behaviour of some of our Modern Schismatics, towards their Superiors, as factious and unreasonable, as well as repugnant to the Dictates of the Divine Spirit, which the Prophets and Apostles were inspir'd and influenc'd by.

And, as there is a Reverence due from Inferiors to their Superiors, in Point of Conversation, so likewise are there some decent Regards and Civilities to be shewed even by Superiors to their Inferiors, who are always to be treated with Candour and Condescension, in their ordinary Capacities; and even when they are consider'd as Criminals, with Meekness and Moderation. Insomuch that, methinks, it is one of the worst Sights in the World, to see some Men, that are gotten upon a little higher Ground than their Neighbours are, to look proudly and scornfully down upon all that are below them, disdaining to vouchsafe them the least Favour or Respect whatsoever. Such churlish, haughty, and foul-mouth'd *Nabals* as these, are not only very unjust, and unreasonable in their Behaviour to others, but they are certainly the greatest Enemies to them-

themselves, that they have in all the World besides ; not only by drawing upon them the Hatred and Enmity of all that are about them, but likewise by tormenting themselves with such frivolous Things, as such Spirits commonly do. Wherefore, that I may please God, my Neighbour, and Myself, in what I speak, tho' I could exceed other Men (which is impossible for me to suppose) in every thing ; I resolve, by God's Grace, always to behave myself so, as if I excell'd them in *nothing* ; and not only to speak reverently to them that are above me, but humbly and civilly to those that are beneath me too. I will always endeavour to use such humble winning Words, as to manifest more of my Love to them than my Power over them : I will always season my Tongue with *savoury*, not *bitter* Expressions, not making my Mouth a Vent for my Fury and Passion to fume out at, but rather an Instrument to draw others Love and Affection in by ; still speaking as civilly unto others, as I would have them speak civilly to me.



Concerning my ACTIONS.

THE other Way of my Soul's putting forth, and shewing herself to the World, is by her *Actions*, which it concerns me as much to look to and regulate, as my *Words* ; forasmuch as there is not the least ill Circumstance in any *Action*, but what, unless it be repented of, must be brought into Question, and answer'd for, at the Last Day : For tho' an *Action* cannot be denominated *good*, unless it be good in *all* Circumstances and Respects ; yet 'tis always denominated *bad*, if it is bad only in *one*. As it is in *Musick*, if but *one* String jar, or be out of Tune, the whole Harmony is spoiled ; so here, if but *one* Circumstance in an *Action* be wanting or defective, the whole *Action* is thereby rendered *immortal*.

How much, therefore, doth it behove me to keep a strict Watch over myself, and so to perform every *Action*, and place every Circumstance in it, that it may have its Approbation in the Court of Heaven ? Well; I am resolv'd,

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by the Grace of GOD, to try what I can do. I know, it is impossible for me to resolve upon particular *Actions*: But, howsoever, I shall resolve upon such *general Rules*, the Application of which to *particular Acts* may make them pleasing and acceptable to the Sight of GOD; always premising this which I have resolved upon before, as the best Foundation, *wiz.* to square all my Actions by the Scripture Rule, and to do nothing but what I have, some way or other, a Warrant from the Word of GOD. Upon this fixed and steady Principle :

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to do every thing in Obedience to the Will of GOD.

IT is not sufficient, that what I do is the Will of GOD, but I must therefore do it, because it is the Will of GOD. For, what saith my Father? *My Son, give me thine Heart, and let thine Eyes observe my Ways,* Prov. xxiii. 26. So that my Father will not only have my Hand, but my Heart too: And my Feet must not walk in the Ways of GOD, till my Eyes have observed and discerned them to be so. I may do an *Action* that in itself is *good*, and yet, at the same time, not do a good *Action*, if I do not therefore do it, because it is so; *Ex. gr.* I may give an Alms to the Poor, feed the Hungry, or cloath the Naked; but let me examine and consider well, upon what Principle these Actions are founded, whether I therefore do them, because GOD hath commanded them; if not, my Feeding of the Poor will be no more a *good Action*, than the *Ravens feeding the Prophet* was, 1 Kings xxvii. 6. Their Feeding of the Prophet was commanded by GOD, as well as my Feeding of the Poor; but I cannot say, they did a good *Action*, because tho' they did do this which was commanded by GOD, yet being irrational Creatures, they could not reflect upon that Command, and so could not do this in Obedience to it.

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RESOLUTIONS.

127

THERE are some Persons, to the very Frame and Disposition of whose Spirits some Sins are, in their Nature, odious and abominable. Thus I have known some, whose very Constitutions have carried them into an Antipathy to Lust and Luxury; and others again, who could never endure to drink beyond their Thirst, much less to unman and be-beast themselves by drinking to Excess. And the like may be observed of Covetousness, which *Luther* was such an Enemy to, that 'tis said to be against his very Nature. Now, I say, tho' the abstaining from these Sins be highly commendable in all Sorts of Persons, yet, unless, together with the Streams of their Natural Disposition, there run likewise a spiritual Desire to please GOD, and obey His Commands, their abstaining from these Vices is no more than the brute Beasts themselves do, who always act according to the Temper of their Bodies, and are never guilty of any Excesses that are prejudicial to them.

HENCE, Servants are commanded to be obedient to their Masters, with Good-will doing Service as to the Lord, and not to Men, Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7. Which clearly shews, that tho' a Servant doth obey his Master, yet if he doth not do it in Obedience unto G O D, he will not find Acceptance with Him. So that, whensoever, I set my Hand to any Action that is good, I must still fix my Eye upon G O D's commanding of it, and do it only in respect to that; as knowing, that if I give but a Farthing to the Poor, in all my Life, and do it in Obedience to G O D's Commands, it shall be accepted sooner than theirs, who feed hundreds at their Table every Day, and have not respect to the same Command.

Do I see a poor Wretch ready to fall down to the Earth, for want of a little Support, and my Bowels begin to yearn towards him? let me search into my Heart, and see what it is that raises this Compassion in me. If it flows only from a natural Tenderness to a Brother in Misery, without regard to the Love of G O D, who has commanded and enjoin'd it, the poor Man may be succoured and reliev'd, but G O D will not be pleased or delighted with it. Again, do my Friends stir me up to pray or hear, or do any other Spiritual or Civil Action, and I therefore only do it, because of their Importunity? I may satisfy my Friends De-

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fire, but cannot properly be said to obey the Commands of GOD, in such a Performance; so that the great and only Foundation that I must resolve to build all the Actions of my Life upon, is an uniform Obedience to that GOD, by whom alone, I am enabled to perform them.

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to do every Thing with Prudence and Discretion, as well as with Zeal and Affection.

WHILST I am penned up in this earthly Tabernacle, I live almost as in a darksome Dungeon having no Light to work by, but a little that springs in at the narrow Crevices of my Understanding. So that I had need to make use of all that little Light and Knowledge I have, to regulate the Heat and Zeal that sometimes fits upon my Spirit. For, *good* Passions may sometimes carry me into *bad* Actions; my Zeal, when hot in the Pursuit of GOD's Glory, may sometimes hurry me beyond his Laws; especially, where Christian Prudence hath not first chalked out the Way, and set the Bounds for it: As, in Discourse, my Zeal may put me upon throwing Pearls before Swine, or using Words, when Silence may be more commendable: So, in my Actions too, unless Wisdom and Discretion govern and command my Affections, I shall frequently run into such as would be altogether needless and impertinent, and therefore ought to be omitted; and daily neglect several Duties, which ought to be performed.

BUT, my Understanding and Discretion is chiefly requisite for the Ordering of Time and Place, and other particular Circumstances, the irregular Management of which may easily spoil the best of Actions. For instance, that may be a good Work at *one* Time and Place, which is not at *another*; and may be very innocent and becoming in *one* Person, tho' quite contrary in *another*. It is therefore, the proper Office of my Understanding, to point out the fittest Time and Place, and Person, for the Performance

RESOLUTIONS. 129

mance of each *Action* I engage in. As for Example. In distributing to the Poor, my Hand of Charity must be either guided by the Eye of Understanding, where, when, how much, and to whom, to give; or else I may, at the same time, not only offend G O D, but wrong my Neighbour, and myself too. And so for all other *Actions* whatsoever, which I ought therefore never to set myself about, tho' it be of the lowest Rank, without consulting the Rules of Wisdom modelled by the Law of G O D.

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of G O D, never to set my Hand, my Head, or my Heart, about any Thing, but what I verily believe is good in itself, and will be esteemed so by G O D.

WITHOUT Faith, the Apostle tells me, it is impossible to please G O D, Heb. xi. 5. For whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin, Rom. xiv. 23. Where, by Faith, we are not to understand that saving Faith, whereby I believe my Person is justified through C H R I S T; but that, whereby I believe my Works shall be accepted by G O D: For Faith here is opposed to Doubting; and that, not about C H R I S T's Dying for me, or my Living in Him, but about the particular Actions of my Life. *He that doubteth, saith the Apostle, is damned if he eat;* that is, He that eateth that, which he doubteth whether he may lawfully eat or no, is damned, because he sins in doing it, and, therefore, may be damned for it. But, why so? Because *he eateth not of Faith;* because he doth that, which he knows not whether he may do or no, not believing it to be really good in itself, or acceptable unto G O D. And, though the Apostle here instances only in that particular Action of Eating, yet what he says with relation to that, is properly applicable to all the other Actions of Life: For he afterwards subjoins, *Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin;* Whatsoever it is, good, or bad, if not done by Faith, 'tis Sin.

AND truly, this Particular will be of great Use through

my whole Life, for the avoiding many Sins, and for the doing of much Good : For, many Things, which are good in themselves, may, for want of Faith, become quite otherwise to me ; my Heart not believing what I do is good, my Hand can never make it so. Or, if I think what I do is bad, tho' it be not so in itself, yet my very thinking it so, will make it so to me.

AND this is that which we call doing any Thing with a good Conscience, or keeping, as St. Paul did, *our Conscience void of Offence*. And, to go contrary to the Dictates of my Conscience in this Particular, is to transgress the Command of GOD. For in this, Conscience is as GOD's Vicegerent in my Soul ; what Conscience commands, GOD commands ; what Conscience forbids, GOD forbids ; that is, I am as really under the Power of Conscience, as the Commands of GOD, in such a case. So that, if I do not obey the former, 'tis impossible for me to obey the latter. But how much, then, doth it behove me, to see, that my Conscience be rightly informed in every thing ? For as if a Judge be misinform'd, 'tis impossible he should pass righteous Judgment ? so, if Conscience be misinform'd, 'tis impossible I should do a righteous Act. And, what a miserable Case shall I then be in ? If I do what in itself is *sinful*, tho' my Conscience tells me, 'tis *good*, yet I sin, because the *Act* in itself is *sinful* ; and if I do what in itself is *good*, and my Conscience tells me 'tis bad, because my Consciences tells me 'tis bad, I sin because my Conscience tells me 'tis so : So that as my *Conscience* is, so will my *Actions* be.

FOR this Reason, I resolve, in the Presence of my great Creator, never to do any thing, till I have first inform'd my Conscience, from the Word of GOD, whether it be lawful for me to do it, or no ; or in case it be not determined there, to make a strict Search and Enquiry into each Circumstance of it, considering with myself what Good or Evil may issue from it, and so what Good or Evil there is in it ; and according as my Conscience, upon the hearing of the Arguments on both sides, shall decide the Matter, I shall do, or not do, it ; never undertaking any thing upon mere Surmises, because it *may* be good, but upon a real and thorough Persuasion that it *is* so.

RESO-

RESOLUTION IV.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do all things for the Glory of GOD.

AS I was not made by, so neither for myself; for GOD, says the Wise Man, *made all things for Himself*, Prov. xvi. 4. And being thus *made* for GOD, it follows on course, that I ought to *act* for GOD; otherwise I shall frustrate the End of my Creation. Insomuch that whatsoever I make my chief Aim in what I do, I make that my God: Do I aim at the Glory of the All-glorious *Jehovah*? 'Tis him I make my GOD: Do I aim at Riches? then 'tis *Mammon* I make my God: And therefore is it, that *Covetousness* is called *Idolatry*, Col. iii. 5. Do I aim at Pleasures? 'tis my *Senses* I make my God, Phil. iii. 19. Do I aim at Popular Applause, or worldly Advancements? or, Do I aim at my own Health or Life? These are my Gods. For what is worshipping, but making all the Powers of my Soul, and Actions of my Body, to bow and stoop to them? Hence it is, that the most High GOD, who hath said, *He will not give His Glory to another*, hath been so express in commanding me to do all things to His Glory, *Whether ye eat or drink*, says the Apostle, *or whatsoever ye do, do all things to the Glory of GOD*, 1 Cor. x. 31.

BUT how can I, poor Worm, be said to do any thing to the Glory of the Eternal GOD? Why, in the same Manner as He is said to do what He doth for His own Glory. And how is that? By manifesting His Glory unto others. Thus, if I can but so *live* and *act*, as thereby to evidence, that the GOD I serve is a glorious God, Glorious in Holiness, Glorious in Goodness, Glorious in Wisdom, Glorious in Power, and the like; this is doing all things to the Glory of God. For Example, By *praying* to GOD, I avouch Him to be a GOD, infinite in Knowledge, that He is present with me, and hears me *pray*, wheresoever I am; and I own Him to be infinite in Mercy, in that He will suffer such a sinful Creature as I am, to address myself to Him, &c. And so there is

not the least *Action* I undertake, but I am so to manage it, as to manifest the Glory of GOD by it, making it my End and Design so to do; otherwise let me do what I will, I am sure to sin; for tho', I confess, a *good* End can never make a *bad* Action *good*, yet, a *bad* End will always make a *good* Action *bad*: So that, as ever I would do any thing that is *good*, I must be sure to do it to the Glory of GOD.

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to mingle such Recreations with my Business, as to farther my Business by my Recreations.

HAVING wholly devoted myself to God, All I have, or am, is still to be improved for Him; insomuch that was it not for the Necessities of Nature, every Moment of my Life should, and ought to be spent in the immediate Worship and Service of Him. But tho' Nature requires some Time from my solemn Serving of Him, for the Recreating of myself; yet Grace requireth, that this Recreating of myself should still be for the Promoting His Service; So that my Recreations do not only fit me for farther Service, but they, in themselves, should be some way or other, serviceable to Him; which that they may be, I must have as great a Care in the Choice, as in the Use of my Recreations.

THERE are some Recreations that are so far from conducing to His Service, that they may make more for the incensing of his Wrath: As Drinking and Gaming, which tho' in themselves lawful, yet, as they often prove an Occasion of Swearing, Lying, Cheating, and Contention amongst Men, and, by Consequence, of Wrath in God; so they ought, by all means, to be shunned and avoided. Indeed, it may be questioned, whether Gaming be ever a lawful Recreation? For, either it is a Lottery, or not. If it be a Lottery, it is not lawful, because it is a great Presumption and Sin, to set God at Work to recreate ourselves; for poor Nothings to employ the chiefest Good, imme-

RESOLUTIONS. 133

immediately to determine such frivolous and trifling Impertinencies. If it be not a Lottery, then it is not a pure Recreation; for if it depends upon Man's Wit and Study, it exercises his Brain and Spirits, as much as if he was about other things; So that being on one side, not lawful, on the other side, no Recreation; it can, on no side, be a lawful Recreation.

FOR, what is the End of Recreation, but to revive my languishing Spirits, to let them rest and be quiet a little, when they are tired with too much Exercise, that they may be fresher, livelier, and fitter for Work afterwards? Hence is it, that GOD indeed hath provided a Recreation for all sensible Creatures; Sleep, which is the Rest of the Spirits in the Nerves. When the little Animal Spirits have been all the Day, running up and down upon the Soul's Errands, then to lie down still and quiet, is a great Refreshment and Revivement to them, provided, still that it be moderately used. Whereas, the indulging ourselves too much in it, is rather a clogging and stupifying of them; as we see in our Bodies, which, when not accustomed to, are most averse from, and unfit for Exercise.

So that the chief and only Time for Recreation, is, when my Spirits are either weary with Labour and Study, or else called in to some necessary Employment in some other Place; as at and after Meals, especially such as are of a hard Digestion; for then the Spirits have enough to do, to turn the Food we eat into good Nourishment. And, therefore, the Intenseness of Study, Running, Wrestling, and such like violent Exercises, are not proper at such a time; because, as in Studying, we draw the Spirits from the Stomach to the Head; so, in the other Exercises, such as moderate Walking, Conference, and free Discourse, about common but necessary Points, we send them from the Stomach into other Parts of the Body, where they are to be set on work.

BUT, that which I have found the best Recreation, both to my Body and Mind, whensoever either of them stands in need of it, is *Musick*, which exercises, at once, both my Body and my Soul; especially, when I play myself. For then, methinks, the same Motion that my

Hand makes upon the Instrument, the Instrument makes upon my Heart; it calls in my Spirits, composes my Thoughts, delights my Ear, recreates my Mind, and so, not only fits me for After-Busines, but fills my Heart, at the present, with pure and useful Thoughts; so that when the *Musick* sounds the sweetliest in my Ears, Truth commonly flows the clearest into my Mind. And hence it is, that I find my Soul is become more harmonious, by being accustom'd so much to Harmony, and so averse to all manner of Discord, that the least Jarring Sounds, either in Notes or Words, seem very harsh and unpleasant to me.

THAT there is something more than ordinary in *Musick*, appears from *David's* making use of it, for driving away the evil Spirit from *Saul*, and *Elisba* for the bringing of the Good Spirit upon himself. From which I am indu'd to believe, that there is really a sort of secret and charming Power in it, that naturally dispels from the Mind, all or most of those black Humours, which the evil Spirit uses to brood upon, and, by composing it into a more regular, sweet and docile Disposition, renders it fitter for the Holy Spirit to work upon, the more suscepitive of Divine Grace, and more faithful Messenger, whereby to convey Truth to the Understanding. But however that be, I must necessarily acknowledge, that of all Recreations, this is by far the more suitable to my Temper and Disposition, in that it is not only an Exercise to my Body, but to my Mind too; my Spirits being thereby made the more nimble and active, and, by Consequence, the fitter to wait upon my Soul, and be employ'd, by her, in whatsoever Business she is engaged.

BUT in this, and all other Recreations, I must always take care, not to exceed my Measure, either in Point of Time, or Intention? I must not follow them too close, nor spend too many Hours in them, but still resolve to use them, as they may not become a Snare to me, but answer the Ends for which they were design'd, that when GOD shall call me to it, I may give him as good an Account of my Recreations, as of my necessary Duties.

Concerning my RELATIONS.

BUT be not deceived, O my Soul; thou art not yet advanced far enough; 'tis not sufficient, to pretend to Holiness in my Thoughts and Affections, and in my Words and Actions; unless I express it likewise in all the Relations and Conditions of Life. The *Commandments of GOD* are said to be *exceeding Broad*; they extend themselves to every Capacity I can possibly be in, not only enjoining me to live *soberly* in respect to Myself, but *righteously* to my Neighbour, *obediently* to my Sovereign, *lovingly* to my Wife, and *faithfully* to my People; otherwise, I cannot live *holily* unto GOD: And, therefore, if I would be thoroughly Religious, I must farther endeavour to fix my *Resolutions* with regard to the several Duties the most High expects from me, in all these particular *Relations* I bear to Him, during my sojourning here on Earth.

RESOLUTION I.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to honour and obey the King, or Prince, whom GOD is pleas'd to set over me, as well as to expect He should safeguard and protect me, whom GOD is pleas'd to set under him.

THE King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the great and glorious Monarch of all the World, having enacted many gracious Laws, is pleas'd to set over every Kingdom and Nation, such Persons as may put them in Execution. So that I cannot but look upon a lawful King, as truly a Representative of the most High GOD, as a Parliament is of the People; and am, therefore, persuaded, that whosoever rebels against Him, rebels against GOD Himself; not only in that He rebels against the Ordinance of GOD, and so, against the GOD of that Ordinance; but because he rebels against him, whom GOD hath set up

as His Vicegerent, to represent His Person, and execute His Laws in such a Part of His Dominions.

HENCE it is, that these two Precepts, *Fear GOD, and honour the King*, are so often join'd together in holy Writ; for he that fears GOD's Power, cannot but honour his Authority; and he that honours not the King, that represents GOD, cannot be said to fear GOD, who is represented by Him. And hence, likewise, it is, that GOD hath been as strict and express in enjoining us Obedience to our Governours, as to Himself: For, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, *Rom. xiii. 1. Let every Soul be subject to the Higher Powers.* Why? because there is no Power but of GOD; the Powers that be, are ordained of GOD.

AND He has denounc'd as great a Judgment against such as rebel against the Magistrate He hath ordain'd, as against those that rebel against Himself: *For, whosoever resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of GOD; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation,* ver. 2. So that the Wrath of GOD shall as certainly fall upon those that rise up against the King, as upon those that fight against GOD. And no wonder, that the Punishment should be the same, when the Fault is the same; For he that fights against his King, fights against GOD Himself, who hath invested him with that Power, and Authority to govern his People, representing His own Glorious Majesty before them.

UPON this Ground it is, that I believe, the Wickedness of a Prince cannot be a sufficient Plea for the Disobedience of his Subjects; for it is not the Holiness, but the Authority of GOD that he represents, which the most wicked, as well as the most holy, Person may be endow'd with: And, therefore, when the Gospel first began to spread itself over the Earth, tho' there was no Christian King, or Supreme Magistrate, of what Title soever, to cherish and protect it; nay, tho' the Civil Powers were then the greatest Enemies to it; yet, even then were the Disciples of CHRIST enjoin'd to *submit themselves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's sake.*

IN SOMUCH that did I live amongst the Turks, I should look upon it as my Duty to obey the Grand Seignior, in all his lawful Edicts, as well as the most Christian and Pious

RESOLUTIONS.

137

Pious King in the World. For, suppose a Prince be never so wicked, and never so negligent in his Duty of protecting Me; it doth not follow, that I must neglect mine of obeying Him. In such a case, I have another Duty added to this; and that is, to pray for him, and to intercede with GOD for his Conversion: For, thus hath the King of Kings commanded, that *Prayers, Supplications, Intercessions, and Giving of Thanks, be made, as for all Men, so more especially, for Kings and those that are in Authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty,* 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. So that, whosoever I address to the Court of Heaven, I must be sure to remember my Sovereign on Earth, that GOD would be pleased to enable His Servant to reign on Earth, as Himself doth in Heaven, in Righteousness and Mercy. But especially, in case of any seeming or real Default, or Defect, tho' I do not think it a Subject's Duty to judge or censure his Sovereign's Actions, I am to be the more earnest in my Prayers and Intercessions for him; but, upon no Account, to fight or rebel against him.

AND, if I am thus strictly obliged to honour, obey, and pray for a bad Prince, how much more should I pay those Duties to one, who represents GOD, not only in His Authority, but in His Holiness too? In this case, sure, as there is a double Engagement to Reverence and Obedience, so I am doubly punishable, if I neglect to shew it, either to the Prince himself, or those that are set under him; for the same Obligations that lie upon me, for my Obedience to the King, bind me likewise to obey his inferior Officers and Magistrates, that act under him; and that for this Reason, because, as he represents GOD, so they represent him; and, therefore, whatever they command, in his Name, I look upon it as much my Duty to obey, as if it was commanded by his own Mouth, and, accordingly, do, from this Moment, by the Grace of GOD, resolve to put this Duty in Practice.

R E S O

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolv'd, by the same Divine Grace, to be as constant in loving of my Wife, as cautious in chusing her.

THough it be not necessary for me resolve upon Marrying, yet it may not be improper, to resolve, in case I should, to follow these Rules of Duty; first, in the Choice of a Wife, and, secondly, in the Affection that I ought to bear towards her.

As for the first, I shall always endeavour to make Choice of such a Woman for my Spouse, who hath first made Choice of CHRIST as a Spouse for herself; that none may be made one Flesh with me, who is not made one Spirit with CHRIST my Saviour. For, I look upon the Image of CHRIST, as the best Mark of Beauty I can behold in her; and the Grace of GOD, as the best Portion I can receive with her. These are Excellencies, which, though not visible to our Carnal Eyes, are nevertheless agreeable to a Spiritual Heart; and such as all Wise and Good Men cannot chuse but be enamoured with. For my own part, they seem to me such necessary Qualifications, that my Heart trembles at the Thoughts of ever having a Wife without them. What? Shall I marry one that is wedded already to her Sins? or have Possession of her Body only, when the Devil has Possession of her Soul? Shall such a one be united to me here, who shall be separated from me for ever hereafter? and condemn'd to scorch in everlasting Burnings? No, if ever it be my Lot to enter into that State, I beg of GOD, that He would direct me in the Choice of such a Wife only, to lie in my Bosom here, as may afterwards be admitted to rest in Abraham's Bosom to all Eternity; such a one, as will so live, and pray, and converse with me upon Earth, that we may both be entitled to sing, to rejoice, and be blessed together, for ever, in Heaven.

THAT this, therefore, may be my Portion and Felicity, I firmly resolve, never to set upon such a Design, before I have first solicited the Throne of Grace, and begged

begged of my Heavenly Father, to honour me with the Partnership of one of His beloved Children; and shall afterwards be as careful and cautious as I can, never to fix my Affections upon any Woman for a Wife, till I am thoroughly persuaded of the Grounds I have to love her, as a true *Christian*.

If I could be thus happy, as to meet with a Wife of these Qualities and Endowments, it would be impossible for me not to be hearty and sincere in my Affection toward her, even tho' I had the greatest Temptations to place them upon another: For, how could I chuse but love her, who has GOD for her Father, the Church for her Mother, and Heaven for her Portion; who loves GOD, and is beloved of Him? Especially, when I consider, that thus to love her, will not only be my Duty, but my Happiness too.

As to the Duty, it is frequently inculcated in Scripture, that *Husbands shall love their Wives*, and that not with a common Love, but as *CHRIST loved His Church*, Eph. v. 25. yea, as their own Body, ver. 28. or, as *themselves*, ver. 33. and they are so to love them, as not to be bitter against them, Col. iii. 19. not to be passionate or angry with them upon every light Matter, nor suffer their Resentments to rise to that Height, upon any Occasion whatsoever, as to abate the least Spark of Conjugal Affection towards them, but to *nourish and cherish them, even as the Lord the Church*. In a word, To do all the kind Offices they can for them, in their Civil Capacities, and to help and forward them, by all means possible, in the Way that leads to Heaven; that as they are united in the Flesh, so they may likewise be united in the Spirit, and raised and rewarded together, at the general Resurrection.

AND, as Love is the Great Duty, so is it, likewise, the Chief Happiness of a married State. I do not mean that Love whereby she loves me, but that wherewith I love her; for, if I myself have not a cordial Esteem and Affection for her, what Happiness will it be to me, to be beloved by her? or rather, what a Misery would it be to be forced to live with one I know I cannot love? As ever, therefore, I desire to be happy, I must perform my

140 RESOLUTIONS.

my Duty in this Particular, and never aim at any other End, in the Choice of a Wife, or expect any other Happiness in the Enjoyment of her, but what is founded in the Principle of pure and inviolable Love. If I should court and marry a Woman for Riches, then, whenever they fail, or take their Flight, my Love and my Happiness must drop and vanish together with them. If I chuse her for Beauty only, I shall love her no longer than while that continues, which is only till Age or Sickness blasts it, and then farewell, at once, both Duty and Delight.

BUT if I love her for her Virtues, and for the sake of GOD, who has enjoin'd it as a Duty, that our Affections should not be alienated, or separated, by any thing but Death; then, tho' all the other sandy Foundations fail, yet will my Happiness remain entire; even tho' I should not perceive those mutual Returns of Love, which are due to me from her upon the same Bottom. But Oh! the Happiness of that Couple, whose Inclinations to each other are as mutual as their Duties; whose Affections, as well as Persons, are linked together with the same Tye! This is the chief Condition requir'd to make the State of Matrimony happy or desirable, and shall be the chief Motive, with me, to induce me to enter into it. For, tho' it be no Happiness to be belov'd by one I do not love; yet it is, certainly, a very great one to be beloved by one I do. If this, then, be my Lot, to have mutual Expressions of Love from the Person I fix my Affections upon, what Joy and Comfort will it raise in my Heart? With what Peace and Amity shall we live together here? and, what Glory and Felicity may we not promise ourselves hereafter.

WHAT is here said of the Duty in chusing and loving of a Wife, may be likewise applied to the Woman's Duty in chusing and loving her Husband. But being not so immediately concern'd in this, I pass on to my next Resolution.

RESO-

RESOLUTIONS.

141

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to do my Endeavour to give to GOD whatsoever Children He shall be pleas'd to give to me, that as they are mine by Nature, they may be His by Grace.

IHAVE sometimes wonder'd at the Providence of God, in bringing so many Millions of People out of the Loins of one Man ; and cannot but make this Use of it, even to stir up myself to a double Diligence, in bringing up my Children *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord*. For who knows, but the Salvation of ten thousand Souls may depend upon the Education of one single Child ?

IF I train up my Son in the Ways of Religion, and teach him what it is to *keep a Conscience void of Offence, towards GOD, and towards Man*; he will then not only have an inward Sense of his own Duty, but take all possible Care to instil it into others, whether Children or Servants, that are committed to his Charge : And these, again, will do the same to theirs, by teaching them to walk in the same Path ; till, by degrees, the Piety and Holiness of one Man has diffus'd itself to all succeeding Generations. But now, on the other hand, if I neglect the Care of my Son's Education, and suffer the Leprosy of Sin and Wickedness to taint and corrupt him, 'tis great odds, without an extraordinary Interposition of Divine Grace, but the Infection may spread itself over all my Posterity ; and so draw down upon me the Curses and Accusations of ten thousand Souls in Hell, which might otherwise have been praising and blessing GOD, for me, to all Eternity, in Heaven.

HENCE it is, that I am resolved to endeavour to be a Spiritual, as well as Natural Father to my Children ; yea, to take more Care to get a Portion for their Souls in Heaven, than to make Provision for their Bodies upon Earth. For, if he be accounted *worse than an Infidel, that provides not for his Family*, the Sustenance of their Bodies,

what

what is he that suffers his Family to neglect the Salvation of their Souls ?

THAT nothing of this, therefore, may be laid to my Charge, if ever Providence sees fit to bless me with Children of my own, I will take effectual Care, so soon as conveniently I can, to devote them unto GOD by Baptism; that what Guilt they have contracted, by coming through my Loins, may be washed away by the Laver of Regeneration; and then to be constantly soliciting at the Throne of Grace, that He who hath given them to me, would be pleased to give Himself to them.

THE next thing to be done, as soon as they come to be capable of Instruction, is, to take all Occasions, and make use of all Means, to work the Knowledge of God into their Heads, and the Grace of CHRIST into their Hearts; by teaching them *to remember their Creator in the Days of their Youth*; by acquainting them with the Duties that He that made them expects from them; with the Rewards they shall have, if *dutiful*; and the Punishments they shall feel, if *disobedient* Children; still accommodating my Expressions to the shallow Capacity of their tender Years. And, according to their doing, or not doing, of what they have been told, I shall reward them with what is most pleasing, or punish them with what is most displeasing to their Years. To speak to them of Heaven, and Eternal Glory, will not encourage them so much, as to give them their Childish Pleasures and Desires: And the denouncing of a future Hell will not affright them so much, as the inflicting a present Smart. Hence it is, that *Solomon* so oft inculcates this upon Parents, as their Duty to their Children, that they should not *spare the Rod, lest they spoil the Child.*

BUT I must still take care, to let them understand, that what I do is from a Principle of Love and Affection to them, not of Fury and Indignation against them. For, by this means, G O D may correct me for correcting them: I may set before my Children such an Example of indiscreet and sinful Passion, as they will be apt enough to learn, without my teaching them. On the other hand, it behoves me, if possible, so to order my Family, that my

RESOLUTIONS. 143

my Children may not see or hear, and so not learn, any thing but Goodness in it; for commonly, according to what we learn when we are young, we practise when we are old. And, therefore, as I shall take great Care, that my Children learn nothing that is evil or sinful at home; so likewise, that they do not come into such Company abroad, where their Innocence may be assaulted with Swearing, Cursing, or any kind of profane or obscene Discourse, which the Generality of our Youth are so obnoxious to.

OR, at least, if this is not wholly to be avoided, to prevent these poysous Weeds from taking Root in the Heart, it behoves me to take all Opportunities of discoursing to them of G O D and C H R I S T, of the Immortality of their Souls, and the future State they are to be doomed to in another World, when they had lived a little while in this; that, according as they grow in Years, thay may grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Christ. And when they come to Years of Discretion, capable of doing farther Honour and Service to G O D and their Country, by some Calling or Profession, I must be sure to place them in such a one, as may be no Hindrance to that High and Heavenly Calling, which they have in C H R I S T J E S U S, but rather contribute to further and promote it: that, being like tender Plants, engrafted into the true Vine, they may bring forth much Fruit, to G O D's Glory, to my Comfort, and their own Salvation.

R E S O L U T I O N . IV.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of G O D, to do my Duty to my Servants, as well as expect they should do theirs to me.

IT was Joshua's, and by G O D's Grace, it shall be my Resolution, that I and my House will serve the L O R D: I, in the first place, and then my House; for if I myself do not, I cannot expect that they should. So that, for the ordering of my Family in general, I must not only

only press their Duty upon them, but likewise practise my own Duty, in suppressing all vicious and lewd Conversation, and composing all Strife and Contention amongst them; in praying every Day, at the least, twice with them; in catechizing and expounding the Principles of Religion to them, and in calling for an account of every Sermon and godly Discourse they hear, either in private or in publick; in seeing that they constantly frequent the Divine Ordinances, and that they behave themselves so conscientiously therein, that they may be, some way or other, the better by them. And to these Ends, I think it my Duty to allow my Servants some Time, every Day, wherein to serve G O D, as well as to see they spend their other Hours in serving me; and to make them sensible that they do not serve me only for myself, but ultimately and principally in reference unto G O D; their serving me making way for my better serving G O D.

AND, for this Reason, I cannot believe, but 'tis as great a Sin, to cumber my Servants, as myself, with too much worldly Busines. For how can they spend any Time in the Service of G O D, when I require all their Time in my own? And, how justly should I be condemned, if by this Means, I should bring them into a sort of Necessity of finning, either in not obeying G O D, or not obeying me? Not that I think it a Servant's Duty, to neglect his Creator to serve his Master; on the contrary, he is obliged, in all Cases, where their Commands interfere, to obey G O D, rather than Man. But where they do not, there is a strict Injunction upon all Servants, that they should be *obedient to their Masters according to the Flesh, with Fear and Trembling, in Singleness of Heart, as unto C H R I S T, Ephes. vi. 5.* But, how with Fear and Trembling? Why, fearing lest they should offend G O D, in offending them, and trembling at the Thoughts of being disobedient to the Divine Command, which enjoins them to be *obedient to their Masters in all things, not answering again, Tit. ii. 9.* That is, not repining at their Master's lawful Commands, not muttering and maundring against them, as some are apt to do: For 'tis as great a Sin in Servants, to speak irreverently to their Masters, as in Masters to speak passionately to their Servants.

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RESOLUTIONS. 145

BUT how are Servants to give Obedience to their Masters, with Singleness of Heart, as unto Christ? Why, by obeying them only in Obedience unto CHRIST; that is, they are therefore to do their Master's Will, because 'tis the LORD's Will they should do it; serving them, not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart, with Good-will doing Service, as to the LORD, and not to Men, Eph. vi. 6, 7. Col. iii. 22. This is the Duty therefore, that I shall be oft incalculating upon my Servants, and shall as oft be reflecting upon myself, that what I require for my own Service may be always in Subordination to GOD's, who is our common Lord and Master, whose Laws are equally obliging to all Ranks and Conditions of Men, and in whose Sight there is no respect of Persons.

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to feed the Flock that GOD shall set me over, with wholesome Food, neither starving them by Idleness, poisoning them with Error, nor puffing them up with Impertinencies.

AND here I cannot but declare, that ever since I knew what it was to study, I have found by Experience, that Spiritual and intellectual Pleasures do as far surpass those that are Temporal and Sensual, as the Soul exceeds the Body. And, for this Reason, as I always thought the Study and Profession of Divinity to be the noblest and most agreeable of all others, as carrying with it its own Encouragement and Reward; so I have often wondered with myself, that the greatest Persons in the World should not be desirous and ambitious of exercising their Parts in the Study of this *necessary*, as well as *sublime* Science, and even devoting themselves to the Profession of it. For, do they aspire after Honour? What greater Honour can there be, than to be the Mouth of GOD to the People, and of the People unto GOD; to have the Most High Himself, not only to speak *by* them, but

But in them too? What greater Honour, than to have ^a Commission from the King of Kings, to represent Himself before His People, and call upon them, in His Name to turn from the Error of their Ways, and walk in the Paths of G O D to everlasting Glory? What greater Honour than to be an Instrument, in His Hand, to bring poor Souls from the Gates of Hell, to set them among Princes in the Court of Heaven? Do they thirst after Pleasures? What greater Pleasure can they have, than to make it their Business to feed themselves and others, with the Bread and Water of Life.

B U T stay, my Soul, let not thy Thoughts run only upon the Dignity of thy Function, and the Spiritual Pleasures that attend the faithful Discharge of it; but think, likewise upon the strict Account thou must give of it in another Life: The serious Consideration of which, as it cannot but be a great Comfort to the true and faithful Pastor, who has diligently fed his Flock with the *sincere Milk of G O D's Word*; so must it be a great Terror and Confusion to the slothful and negligent, the false and deceitful Dispensers of the Divine Mysteries, who have either carelessly lost, or treacherously deluded, the Souls of those committed to their Charge, which they must, one Day, answer for, as well as for their own. And, therefore that nothing of this kind may ever be laid to my Charge, I solemnly promise and resolve, before G O D, so to demean myself in the Exercise of my Ministerial Function, as to make the Care of Souls, especially of those committed to my Charge, the chief Study and Business of my Life.

A ND that without Partiality or Exception; I must not single out some of the best of my Flock, such as I have the highest Respect for, or have received the greatest Obligations from; but minister to every one, according to their several Necessities. If I meet with Men of Knowledge and Virtue, my Business must be to confirm and establish them therein; if with those that are ignorant and immoral, to teach and instruct them in the Ways of Religion, and by all Means possible, to reclaim and reduce them to the Exercise of their Duty; always rememb'ring, that as the Blessed J e s u s, the great Shepherd and Bishop of our Souls,

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RESOLUTIONS. 147

was not sent, save unto the lost Sheep of the House of Israel; and came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance; so it is the indispensable Duty of his Apostles and Ministers, (and by the Grace of GOD, I shall make it mine) to follow His Example in this Particular; to spare no Time nor Pains in the Reformation of Sinners, though it be never so irksome and difficult to accomplish; even though I should meet with such as the Prophet David speaks of, *who hate to be reformed, and cast my Words behind them.* And, therefore, as I know it is my Duty, so I shall always endeavour to take Pleasure in the several Offices I perform of this Kind, *to strengthen the weak, heal the wounded, and bind up the broken Heart;* to call in those that err and go astray, and *to seek and save those that are lost.*

To these Ends, tho' Preaching is, without doubt, a most excellent and useful, as well as necessary Duty, (especially, if it be perform'd, as it ought, with Zeal and Reverence, and the Doctrine applied and press'd home, with Sincerity of Affection) yet, I shall not think it sufficient to instruct my People only from the Pulpit, but take all Opportunities to instil good Thoughts and Principles into their Minds in my private Conversation. I know, it is impossible for all Ministers frequently to visit every particular Person or Family in their Parish, there being, in some Parishes, especially in and about London, so many thousands of Souls: But, howsoever, if it should please the Lord, to call me to such a Flock, though I cannot visit all, I shall visit as many as I can; especially, those that are sick and infirm, and be sure to feed them with the sincere Milk of the Word, such as may turn to their Spiritual Nourishment, and make them grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. I will not fill their Heads with Speculative Notions and Niceties in Divinity; (which, among the less judicious, are very often the Occasion of Heresy and Error, and sometimes also, of Delusion and Distraction:) But my chief Care shall be to instruct them in those necessary Truths, which their Christian Faith indispensably obliges them to know and believe, and press them to the Performance of those Duties, without which they cannot be

be saved; meekly and impartially reproving the particular Vices they are most inclined and addicted to, and chearfully encouraging and improving whatever virtuous Actions they are, any of them, exemplary in, and whatever good Habits and Inclinations the Divine Grace has put into their Hearts.

AND since Love and Charity is the great Characteristic of our Profession, the Bond and Cement of all other Christian Duties, in order to make my Ministry the more successful, I resolve, in the last place, not only to avoid all Differences and Disputes with them myself, but amicably to compose all such as may arise among the Neighbours. In a word, I shall make it my Endeavour, in all things, so to approve myself as a faithful Minister, both in Life and Doctrine, before them, that, at the last Day, when the great God shall call for my Parish, and myself to appear before him, I may be fitly prepared to give an Account of both; at least, to answer for as many of them as He requires; and may, with Joy and Comfort, pronounce this Sentence of my Saviour, if it may, without Offence, be applied to his Ministers, *Behold, I and the Children which Thou hast given me.*

RESOLUTION VI.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to be as faithful and constant to my Friend, as I would have my Friend to be faithful and constant to me.

HAVING before resolv'd to be zealous in loving God, I here resolve to be as constant in loving my Friend. But why do I resolve upon this? Is it possible to live, and not to love? This to me seems as plain a Contradiction, as to live, and not to live. For Love, in my Opinion, is as much the Life of the Soul, as the Soul is the Life of the Body. So that, for my own part, I shall expect to cease to live, at the very Moment that I cease to love; nay, I do not look upon Love only as my Life, but as the Joy and Comfort of it too. And, for this Reason, I shall never envy any Man his Riches, Pleasures,

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RESOLUTIONS. 149

or Preferments, provided that I can but enjoy the Persons my Soul delights in, *viz.* CHRIST in the first place, and my Friend and Neighbour in the second.

BUT then I must have a great Care, where, and how, I place this Affection; for if I place it wrong my very Loving will be Sinning. And, therefore, I shall always endeavour to make such only my Friends, as are Friends to GOD. Not that I look upon it as necessary to love my Friends always under that Notion only as they are Friends of GOD; for then, no Love but that which is *Spiritual* would be lawful; whereas, there is, doubtless, a *Natural* Love, that is no less a Duty, and, by Consequence, no less lawful, than the other; as, the Love of Parents towards their Children, and Children towards their Parents; and the mutual Complacency that arises betwixt Friends, as well as Relations, from the Harmony and Agreement of Humours, and Tempers. Thus our Saviour is said to have loved St. John more than any of His other Disciples, which cannot be understood of a *Spiritual* Love; for this, undoubtedly, was equal to all; but being a Man subject to the like Passions (though not Imperfections) as we are, He placed more *Natural* Affection upon, and might have more *Natural* Complacency in John, than in His other Disciples.

AND, therefore, when I say, I am to make such my Friends only, as are Friends to GOD, my Meaning is, That I will make none my Friends, but such as I know to be good Men, and good Christians, such as deserve my Love in a *Spiritual*, as well as a *Natural* Sense; and since I may lawfully love my Friend in both these Senses, the one is so far from being exclusive, that it is really perpective of the other. And for this Reason, as the *Spiritual* Good of my Friend is always to be perferr'd before that which is *Temporal*, I am resolv'd to found the one upon the other. I will always be ready, as oft he stands in need, either for my Advice, Encouragement, or Assistance, to do him all the kind Offices I can in his worldly Affairs, to promote his Interest, vindicate his Character from secret Aspersions, and defend his Person from open Assaults: to be faithful and punctual in the Performance of my Promises to him, as well as in keeping the Secrets

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he has entrusted me with. But all these things are to be done with a tender Regard to the Honour of GOD, and the Duties of Religion ; so that the Services I do him in his Temporal Concerns, must still be consistent with, and subservient to, the Spiritual Interest and Welfare of his Immortal Soul, in which I am principally obliged to manifest my Friendship towards him. If I see him wander out of the right Way, I must immediately take care to advertise him of it, and use the best means I can to bring him back to it. Or if I know him to be guilty of any Vices, I must endeavour to convince him of the Danger and Malignity of them, and importune and persuade him to amend and forsake them. And lastly, I must be as constant in keeping my Friend, as cautious in chasing him ; still continuing the Heat of my Affections towards him, in the Day of his *Affliction*, as well as in the Height of his *Prosperity*.

THESE are the Rules, whereby I resolve to express my Friendship unto Others, and whereby I would have Others to express Their Friendship unto Me.

* *

Concerning my TALENTS.

HAVING so solemnly devoted myself to GOD, according to the Covenant He hath made with me, and the Duty I owe to Him ; not only what I am, and what I do, but likewise what I have, is still to be improv'd for Him. And this I am bound to, not only upon a Federal, but even a Natural Account ; for whatsoever I have, I receiv'd from Him, and, therefore, all the Reason in the World, whatsoever I have, should be improv'd for Him. For, I look upon myself, as having no other Propriety in what I enjoy, than a Servant hath in what he is entrusted with to improve for his Master's Use : Thus, tho' I should have Ten Thousand Pounds a Year, I should have no more of my own, than if I had but two Pence in all the World. For it is only committed to my Care for a Season, to be employed and improved to the best

RESOLUTIONS.

151

best Advantage, and will be called for again at the grand Audit, when I must answer for the Use or Abuse of it; so that, whatsoever in a Civil Sense, I can call my own, that, in a Spiritual Sense, I must esteem as G O D's. And, therefore, it nearly concerns me, to manage all the Talents I am entrusted with, as Things I must give a strict Account for, at the Day of Judgment. As G O D bestows His Mercies upon me, through the Greatness of His Love and Affection, so I am to restore His Mercies back again to Him, by the Holiness of my Life and Conversation. In a Word, whatever I receive from His Bounty, I must, some way or other, lay out for His Glory, accounting nothing mine own, any farther than as I improve it for G O D's Sake, and the spiritual Comfort of my own Soul.

In order to this, I shall make it my Endeavour, by the Blessing of G O D, to put in Practice the following Resolutions.

R E S O L U T I O N I.

I am resolved, if possible, to redeem my Time past, by using a double Diligence for the future, to employ and improve all the Gifts and Endowments, both of Body and Mind, to the Glory and Service of my Great Creator.

TIME, Health, and Parts, are three precious Talents, generally bestowed upon Men, but seldom improved for G O D. To go no farther than myself; How much Time and Health have I enjoy'd, by G O D's Grace? and, how little of it have I laid out for His Honour? On the contrary, how oft have I offended, affronted, and provoked Him, even when He has been courting me with His Favours, and daily pouring forth His Benefits upon me? This alas! is a sad Truth, which whensoever I seriously reflect upon, I cannot but acknowledge the Continuance of my Life as the greatest Instance of G O D's Mercy and Goodness, as well as the greatest Motive to my Gratitude and Obedience. In a

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due Sense, therefore, of the Vanities and Follies of my younger Years. I desire to take Shame to myself for what is past, and do this Morning, humbly prostrate my self before the Throne of Grace, to implore G O D's Pardon, and to make solemn Promises and Resolutions, for the future, to *cast off the Works of Darkness, and to put on the Armour of Light*; And not only so, but to redeem the precious Minutes I have squandered away, by husbanding those that remain to the best Advantage. I will not trifle and sin away my Time in the Pleasures of Sense, or the Impertinencies of Busines, but shall always employ it in Things that are necessary and useful, and proportion it to the Weight and Importance of the Work or Busines I engage myself in; allotting such a Part of it for This Busines, and such a Part for That, so as to leave no Intervals for unlawful, or unnecessary Actions to thrust themselves in, and pollute my Life and Conversation.

FOR, since it has pleased G O D to favour me with the Blessing of Health, and I am not certain how soon I may be deprived of it, and thrown upon a Bed of Sickness, which may deprive me of the Use of my Reason, or make me incapable of any thing else, but grappling with my Distemper; it highly concerns me to make a due Use of this Blessing, while I have it; to improve these Parts and Gifts that G O D has endowed me with, to the Manifestation of His Glory, the Salvation of my Soul, and the publick Good of the Community, whereof I am a Member.

To these Ends, it will be requisite for me frequently to consider with myself, which way my weak Parts may be the most usefully employed, and to bend them to those Studies and Actions, which they are naturally most inclined to, and delighted in, with the utmost Vigour and Application; more particularly in Spiritual Matters, to make use of all Opportunities for the convincing others of G O D's Love to them, and their Sins against G O D; of their Misery by Nature, and Happiness by C H R I S T, and when the Truth of G O D happens to be any ways traduced or opposed, to be as valiant in the Defence of it, as its Enemies are violent in their Assaulls against it.

And

RESOLUTIONS. 153

And as I thus resolve to employ my inward Gifts and Faculties for the Glory and Service of G O D ; so,

RESOLUTION II.

I am resolved by the Divine Grace, to employ my Riches, the outward Blessings of Providence to the same End; and to observe such a due Medium in the Dispensing of them, as to avoid Prodigality on the one hand, and Covetousness on the other.

THIS, without doubt, is a necessary Resolution, but 'tis likewise very difficult to put in Practice, without a careful Observance of the following Rules;

FIRST, Never to lavish out my Substance, like the Prodigal, in the Revels of Sin and Vanity, but, after a due Provision for the Necessities and Conveniencies of Life, to lay up the Overplus for the Acts of Love and Charity toward my indigent Brethren. I must consider the Uses and Ends for which G O D has entrusted me with such and such Possessions; that they were not given me for the Pampering my Body, the Feeding my Lusts, or Puffing me up with Pride and Ambition; but for Advancing His Glory, and my own and the publick Good. But why do I say given? When, as I before observed, I have no Propriety in the Riches I possess: They are only lent me for a few Years to be dispensed and distributed, as my Great Lord and Master sees fit to appoint, *viz.* for the Benefit of the Poor and Necessitous, which He has made his Deputies, to call for and receive His Money, at my Hands. And this, indeed, is the best Use I can put it to, for my own Advantage, as well as theirs: For the Money I bestow upon the Poor, I give to G O D to lay up for me, and I have His infallible Word and Promise for it, that it shall be paid me again with unlimited Interest out of His Heavenly Treasury, which is Infinite, Eternal, and Inexhaustible. Hence it is, that whensoever I see any fit Object of Charity, methinks I hear the Most High say unto me, Give this poor Brother so much of My Stock,

which thou haft in thy Hand, and I will place it to thy Account, as given to myself: and, *Look what thou layest out, and it shall be paid thee again.*

THE second Rule is, Never to spend a Penny, where it can be better spared; nor to spare it, where it can be better spent. And this will oblige me, whensoever any Occasion offers, of laying out Money, considerately to weigh the Circumstances of it, and, according as the Matter upon mature Deliberation requires, I must not grudge to spend it: Or, if, at any time, I find more Reason to spare, I must not dare to spend it; still rememb'ring, that as I am strictly to account for the Money GOD has given me, so I ought neither to be covetous in saving, or hoarding it up, nor profuse in throwing it away, without a just Occasion. The main Thing to be regarded, is, the End I propose to myself in my Expences, whether it be really the Glory of GOD, or my own carnal Humour and Appetite. For Instance, If I lay out my Money in cloathing my Body, the Question must be, Whether I do this only for Warmth and Decency, or to gratify my Pride and Vanity? If the former, my Money is better spent; if the latter, 'tis better spared than spent; Again, Do I lay it out in Eating and Drinking? If this be only to satisfy the Necessities of Nature, and make my Life more easy and comfortable, it is, without doubt, very well spent; but if it be to feed my Luxury and Intemperance, 'tis much better spared; better for my Soul in keeping it from Sin, and better for my Body in preserving it from Sicknes, and this Rule is the more strictly to be observed, because 'tis as great a Fault in a Servant not to lay out his Master's Money when he shou'd, as to lay it out when he shou'd not.

IN order, therefore, to avoid both these Extremes, there is a *third* Rule to be observed under this *Resolution*; and that is, to keep a particular Account of all my Receipts and Disbursements, to set down in a Book, every Penny I receive at the Hands of the Almighty, and every Penny I lay out for His Honour and Service. By this Means, I shall be, in a manner, forced both to get my Money lawfully, and to lay it out carefully; for how can I put that amongst the Money I have received from

RESOLUTIONS. 155

from GOD, which I have got by unlawful Means? Certainly, such Money I may rather account as received from the Devil for his Use, than from GOD, for His. And so must I either lay every Penny out for God, or otherwise I shall not know where to set it down, for I must set down nothing but what I lay out for His Use; and if it be not for his Use, with what Face can I say it was? And, by this means also, when God shall be pleas'd to call me to an Account for what I received from Him, I may with Comfort appear before Him; and having improv'd the Talents he had committed to my Charge, I may be received into His heavenly Kingdom, with a *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into thy Master's Joy.*

RESOLUTION III.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to improve the Authority GOD gives me over others, to the Suppression of Vice, and the Encouragement of Virtue, and so for the Exaltation of GOD's Name on Earth, and their Souls in Heaven.

THAT all Power and Authority hath its Original from GOD, and that one Creature is not over another, but by the Providence and Will of Him, who is over all; and, by Consequence, that all the Authority we have over Men, is to be improv'd for GOD, is clear, not only from that Question, *Who made thee to differ from another? and, what hast thou, which thou didst not receive?* 1 Cor. iv. 7. but likewise, and that more clearly, from that positive Assertion, *The Powers that be, are ordain'd of God,* Rom. xiii. 1. That, therefore, I may follow my Commission, I must stick close to my present Resolution, even in all the Power GOD gives me, to behave myself as one invested with that Power from above, to restrain Vice and encourage Virtue, as oft as I have an Opportunity so to do, always looking upon myself, as one commission'd by Him, and acting under Him. For this Reason, I must still endeavour to exercise my Authority; as if the most High GOD was in my Place in Person, as well

well as Power. I must not follow the Dictates of my own carnal Reason, much less the Humours of my own bias'd Passion, but still keep to the Acts which GOD Himself hath made either in the general Statute Book for all the World, the Holy Scriptures, or in the particular Laws and Statutes of the Nation wherein I live.

AND questionles, if I discharge this Duty as I ought, whatever Sphere of Authority I move in, I am capable of doing a great deal of Good, not only by my Power, but by my Influence and Example. For common Experience teaches us, that even the Inclinations and Desires of those that are eminent for their Quality or Station, are more powerful than the very Commands of GOD himself; especially, among Persons of an inferior Rank, and more servile Disposition, who are apt to be more wrought upon by the Fear of present Punishment, or the Loss of some temporal Advantage, than any thing that is *future or spiritual*. Hence it is, that all those whom GOD entrusteth with this precious Talent, have a great Advantage and Opportunity in their Hands, for the suppressing Sin, and exalting Holiness in the World: A Word from their Mouths against Whoredom, Drunkenness, Prophanation of the Sabbath, or the like: yea, their very Example and silent Gestures, being able to do more than the Threatnings of Almighty God, either pronounc'd by himself in his Word, or by his Ministers in his holy Ordinances.

THIS, therefore, is my Resolution, that whatsoever Authority the most High God shall be pleas'd to put upon me, I will look upon it as my Duty, and always make it my Endeavour, to demolish the Kingdom of Sin and Satan, and establish that of CHRIST and Holiness in the Hearts of all those to whom my Commission extends; looking more at the *Duty* GOD expects from me, than at the *Dignity* He confers upon me. In a word, I will so exercise the Power and Authority GOD puts into my Hands here, that when the particular Circuit of my Life is ended, and I shall be brought to the general Assize to give an Account of *this* amongst my other Talents, I may give it up with Joy; and so exchange my Temporal Authority upon Earth, for an Eternal Crown of Glory in Heaven.

RESOLUTION IV.

I am resolv'd, by the Grace of GOD, to improve the Affections GOD stirs up in others towards me to the stirring up of their Affections towards GOD.

IF the Authority I have over others, then questionless, the Affection others have to me, is to be improv'd for GOD; and that because the Affection they bear to me in a natural Sense hath a kind of Authority in me over them in a spiritual one. And this I gather from my own Experience; for I find none to have a greater Command over me, than they that manifest the greatest Affections for me. Indeed, 'tis a Truth generally agreed on, that a real and sincere Esteem for any Person, is always attended with a Fear of displeasing that Person; and where there is Fear in the Subject, there will, doubtless, be Authority in the Object; because Fear is the Ground of Authority, as Love is, or ought to be, the Ground of that Fear. The greatest Potentate, if not fear'd, will not be obey'd; if his Subjects stand in no Awe of him, he can never strike any Awe upon them. Nor will that Awe have its proper Effects in curbing and restraining them from Sin and Disobedience, unless it proceeds from, and is join'd with, Love.

I KNOW, the Scripture tells me, *There is no Fear in Love, but that perfect Love casteth out Fear,* 1 John iv. 18. But that is to be understood of our Love to GOD, not to Men, and that a perfect Love too, such as can only be exercised in Heaven. There, I know, our Love will be consummate, without Mixture as well as without Defect; there will be a perfect Expression of Love on both sides, and so no Fear of Displeasure on either. But this is a Happiness which is not to be expected here on Earth; so long as we are clothed with Flesh and Blood, we shall, in one degree or other, be still under the Influence of our Passions and Affections. And, therefore, as there is no Person we can love upon Earth, but who may sometimes see Occasion to be displeased with us; so he will always

always, upon this Account, be feared by us. This I look upon as the chief Occasion of one Man's having so much Power and Influence over another.

BUT how comes this under the Notion of a Talent received from GOD, and so to be improved for Him? Why, because 'tis He, and He alone, that kindles and blows up the Sparks of pure Love and Affection in us, and that by the Breathings of His own Spirit. It was the LORD that gave *Joseph* Favour in the Sight of the *Keeper of the Prison*, Gen. xxxix. 21. And that brought *Daniel* into Favour and tender Love with the *Prince of the Eunuchs*, Dan. i. 9. And so of all others in the World: For we are told elsewhere, that as *GOD fashioneth the Hearts of Men, so he turneth them, whichever way he will*. In somuch that I can never see any express their Love to me, but I must express my Thankfulness to GOD for it; Nor can I feel in myself any Warmth of Affection towards others, without considering it as a Talent hid in my Breast, which I am obliged in Duty to improve for Him by stirring up their Affections unto Him, whose Affections Himself hath stirred up towards me. And this will be the more easy to affect, if I take care, in the first place, to express the Zeal and Sincerity of my own Love to GOD, by making Him the chief Object of my Esteem and Adoration, and manifest my Aversion to the Sins they are guilty of, by representing them as most loathsome and abominable, as well as most dangerous and damnable. For, where-ever there is a true and cordial Affection to any Person, it is apt to bias those that are under the Influence of it, to chuse the same Objects for their Love or Aversion, that such a Person does, *i.e.* to love what he loves, and hate what he hates. This, therefore, is the first thing to be done, to stir up the Affections of others to love and serve GOD.

ANOTHER Way of my improving the Affections of others to this End, is by setting them a good Example; for commonly what a *Friend* doth, be it good or bad, is pleasing to us, because we look not at the Goodness of the *Thing* which is done, but at the Loveliness of the Person that doth it. And if the Vices of a Friend seem amiable, how much more will their *Vertues* shine? For this

RESOLUTIONS. 159

this Reason, therefore, whensoever I perceive any Person to shew a Respect for, or Affection to, me, I shall always look upon it as an Opportunity put into my Hands, to serve and glorify my great Creator, and shall look upon it as a Call from Heaven, as much as if I heard the Almighty say to me, I desire to have this Person love me, and therefore have I made him to love thee; do thou but set before him an Example of Goodness and Virtue, and his Love to thy Person shall induce and engage him to direct his Actions according to it. This, therefore, is the Rule that I fully resolve to guide myself by, with relation to those who are pleased to allow me a Share in their Esteem and Affection, which I hope to improve to their Advantage in the End: That as they love me, and I love them now, so we may all love GOD, and GOD love us to all Eternity.

RESOLUTION V.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to improve every good Thought to the producing of good Affections in myself, and as good Actions with respect to GOD.

WHATSOEVER comes from GOD, being a Talent to be improv'd to Him, I cannot but think good Thoughts to be as precious Talents, as 'tis possible a Creature can be blessed with. But let me esteem them as I will, I am sure my Master will reckon them amongst the Talents he entrusts me with, and will call me to an Account for; and, therefore, I ought not to neglect them. The Scripture tells me, *I am not sufficient of myself to think any thing, as of myself, but that my Sufficiency is of GOD,* 2 Cor. iii. 5. And if I be not sufficient to think any thing, much less am I able of myself to think of that which is good; forasmuch as to good Thoughts there must always be suppos'd a special Concurrence of GOD's Spirit; whereas to other Thoughts there is only the general Concurrence of His Presence. Seeing, therefore, they come from GOD, how must I lay them out for Him? Why,

Why, by sublimating *good* Thoughts into *good* Affections. Does GOD vouchsafe to send down into my Heart a Thought of Himself? I am to send up this Thought to Him again, in the fiery Chariot of Love, Desire, and Joy. Doth he dart into my Soul a Thought of Holiness and Purity? I am to dwell and meditate upon it, till it break out into a Flame of Love and Affection for him. Doth he raise up in my Spirit a Thought of Sin, and shew me the Ugliness and Deformity of it? I must let it work its desired Effect, by making it as loathsome and detestable, as that Thought represents it to be.

BUT *good* Thoughts must not only be improved to produce *good* Affections in my Heart, but likewise *good* Actions in my Life. So that the Thoughts of GOD should not only make me more taken with His Beauty, but more active for His Glory; and the Thoughts of Sin should not only damp my Affection to it, but likewise deter and restrain me from the Commission of it.

AND thus every *good* Thought that GOD puts into my Heart, instead of slipping out, as it does with some others, without Regard, will be cherished and improved, to the producing of *good* Actions: These Actions will entitle me to the Blessings of GOD, and That to the Kingdom of Glory.

RESOLUTION VI.

I am resolved, by the Grace of GOD, to improve every Affliction GOD lays upon me, as an Earnest or Token of His Affection towards me.

EVERY Thing that flows from God to His Servants, coming under the Notion of Talents, to be improv'd for Himself, I am sure *Afflictions*, as well as other Mercies, must needs be reckoned amongst those Talents GOD is pleased to vouchsafe. Indeed, it is a Talent, without which I should be apt to forget the Improvement of all the rest, and which, if well improved, itself will work out for me a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, 2 Cor. iv. 7.
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RESOLUTIONS.

161

'Tis the Non-improvement of an Affliction that makes it a Curse; whereas, if improv'd, 'tis as great a Blessing, as any GOD is pleased to scatter amongst the Children of Men. And therefore it is, that GOD most frequently entrusteth this precious Talent with his own peculiar People; *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth;* therefore will I punish you for your Iniquities, Amos. iii. 2. Those that God knows the best, with them will He entrust the most, if not of other Talents, yet be sure of this; which is so useful and necessary to bring us to the Knowledge of ourselves and our Creator, that without it we should be apt to forget both.

'Tis this, that shews us the Folly and Pride of Presumption, as well as the Vanity and Emptiness of all worldly Enjoyments, and deters us from incensing and provoking Him, from whom all our *Happiness* as well as our *Afflictions*, flow: Let, therefore, what Crosses or Calamities soever befall me, I am still resolved to bear them all, not only with a patient Resignation to the Divine Will, but even to comfort, and rejoice myself in them, as the greatest Blessings. For Instance, am I seiz'd with Pain and Sickness? I shall look upon it as a Message from GOD, sent on purpose to put me in mind of Death, and to convince me of the Necessity of being always prepared for it by a good Life, which a State of uninterrupted Health is apt to make us unmindful of. Do I sustain any Losses or Crosses? The true Use of these is, to make me sensible of the Fickleness and Inconstancy of this World's Blessings, which we can no sooner cast our Eye upon, but they immediately *take to themselves Wings, and fly away* from us. And so, all other Afflictions GOD sees fit to lay upon me, may, in like manner, be, some way or other, improved for my Happiness.

BUT, besides the *particular* Improvements of *particular* Chastisements, the *general* Improvement of *all* is the Increasing of my Love and Affection to that God, who brings these *Afflictions* upon me. For how runs the *Mittimus*, whereby he is pleased to send me to the Dungeon of *Afflictions*? *Deliver such a one to Satan to be buffeted in the Flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus,* 1 Cor. v. 5. By this it appears, that the

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RESOLUTIONS.

Furnace of *Afflictions*, which God is pleas'd, at any time, to throw me into, is not heated at the Fire of His Wrath, but at the Flames of His Affection to me. The Consideration whereof, as it should more inflame my Love to Him, so shall it likewise engage me to express a greater Degree of Gratitude towards Him, when He singles me out, not only to suffer *from* Him, but *for* Him too. For this is an Honour, indeed peculiar to the Saints of God, which if He should be pleas'd ever to prefer me to, I shall look upon it, as upon other *Afflictions*, to be improv'd for His Glory, the Good of others, and the everlasting Comfort of my own Soul.

Thus have I reckoned up the Talents GOD hath, or may, put into my Hands, to be improv'd for His Glory. May the same Divine Being that entrusted me with them, and inspir'd me with these good *Resolutions* concerning them, enable me, by His Grace, to make a due Use of them, and carefully to put in Practice, what I have thus religiously resolved upon!

THERE are some other Mercies, which might be set down in the Catalogue of Talents, as the Graces and Motions of GOD's Holy Spirit, and the Use of His Holy Ordinances, under the Ministry of the Gospel; but these being included and insisted on, under several of the foregoing Heads, will not require a distinct Consideration.

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